

# **The Portrayal and Role of Anger in the *Res Gestae* of Ammianus Marcellinus**

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*To my partner Danijel, with all my love.*

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## PREFACE

This book discusses and analyses the use of anger in the *Res Gestae* of Ammianus Marcellinus. The time frame covered is from AD 354–378, and includes a diverse area covering most of the Roman Empire from Gaul to Germania, to Illyricum, Spain, Africa, Thrace, Syria and Italy. The period is contained in the extant volumes of Ammianus' works, from Books 14–31, but this book also encapsulates the first century of the Empire, when Tacitus explored the intricacies of the Roman world from his own perspective, observations and indeed pure guesswork in regards to anger in Roman and barbarian societies.

Although one can hardly make the claim that Ammianus has been under-studied, there is still scope for bringing new light into the emotional framework that perhaps surprisingly supports so much of the narrative. Though detailed discussions of anger in antiquity are currently being produced, no one has as yet produced such a comprehensive guide to anger in both Ammianus and to a lesser extent, Tacitus. This is therefore an attempt to fill that void in our knowledge, and provides a comprehensive framework from which inferences can be accumulated and built upon. In fact this sets the groundwork for further studies that could deal with the emotions that I was forced through natural constraints to leave out, such as fear and grief. In regards to anger, this book is exhaustive, but hopefully not overly burdensome; I have attempted to provide much of the scholarship in English and other European languages that is relevant, although I am sure I have made unfortunate omissions. The result is an almost complete guide to the *Res Gestae*, its various subject matters and human beings, showing the way in which anger affected all these individuals and events.

The approach I have taken may resemble a sort of content analysis that one would find in areas outside of Classics. I have used this method deliberately as it seemed the logical choice to provide a type of formulaic approach to the application of cohesion to such a large pool of data. With a concrete methodology I have tried not to remain static in my findings, but to provide some depth to my discussion and to add a sense of what Ammianus himself must have thought and felt in this period, or at least what he wished his readers to believe he felt.

‘How did Ammianus perceive that anger affected this group, or individual, or event?’ is the underlying question throughout this study, and to an extent it determines its shape. Such a question, which examines the very psyche of the author, is extremely complex and difficult to answer, even in our modern times when biographies and autobiographies of authors are common. For our long deceased historian, this is of course almost impossible. However, unless a judgement is made in regards to the personality of the historian, it is difficult to write anything meaningful in regards to unearthing the complexities behind the writing of the *Res Gestae* and the approach to its processes. This is therefore an attempt to provide an answer to the question of a late antique historian’s understanding of emotional cause and effect and how this shaped and formed his narrative. Although, as only one aspect of his writing is being looked at (with others coming in only now and again), this cannot entirely provide a complete answer. Many topics, such as the influence of rhetoric, Greek and Roman literary predecessors, religion and politics, deserve far more attention than I could possibly have paid here. I have touched on all these issues, but briefly and I am aware that more could be written and indeed has been by authors worthier than I. It is hoped that my arguments put forth in the book are not adversely affected by these oversights.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This book evolved from my PhD thesis and has undergone significant revisions since then. The topic for my PhD was the result of developing an obsession with Late Antiquity whilst studying Early Byzantine history as an undergraduate student, with my lecturer and tutor being Dr Paul Tuffin. Whilst other aspects of Byzantine history attracted me, I always returned to that enigmatic historian of the fourth century, Ammianus Marcellinus and the marvellous way in which he portrayed himself within his own work as a sort of alternative hero. In the footnotes, references to historians, mostly Roman, reflect the ties Ammianus had to previous literary geniuses, and this is something I found fascinating in his work. Translation of the Latin is a complex matter, and I am indebted to Hamilton's work as I make reference to in Chapter 1, but where necessary the translations are my own, and I apologise for any mistakes therein.

Throughout the years I worked on this thesis/book, I received enormous assistance from several people. First and foremost is my supervisor. Dr Ron Newbold guided my initial steps into research and helped to mould my writing style, although he is not responsible for my deficiencies. Dr Newbold has been a continual and permanent feature of my undergraduate and postgraduate years. He was my tutor in first year Classics, my teacher in Latin and Roman Imperial History, my lecturer for Classical Mythology and my supervisor for Honours, where I looked at the emperors Caligula, Nero and Commodus and how, by coming to power at a young age, they were variously corrupted. His breadth of toleration was then stretched as he guided me through the complex processes of writing a PhD thesis and I owe him a huge debt of gratitude for that.

Next the support of my partner, my best and dearest friend Dr Danijel Dzino, whose knowledge of all things ancient has proved invaluable to me. His guidance was exceptional, as I pushed boundaries and explored new angles of sociology and ethnography, previously unknown to me. Danijel deserves particular mention for his support, friendship and criticism.

Also I would like to thank the rest of the Classics staff at the University of Adelaide who are always willing to answer questions and provide feedback on aspects of my work. I would also like to thank my mum, Pam, for all her help in editing and formatting. It was a big job! Finally, I would like to thank Gorgias Press, and in particular Katie Stott for continuous support.

Barbara Sidwell  
Adelaide University  
November 2008

## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

<i>A&amp;A</i>	<i>Antike und Abendland: Beiträge zum Verständnis der Griechen und Römer und ihre Nachlebens</i>
<i>AAntHung</i>	<i>Acta Antiqua Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae</i>
<i>AC</i>	<i>L'Antiquité Classique</i>
<i>AClass</i>	<i>Acta Classica: proceedings of the Classical Association of South Africa</i>
<i>AH</i>	<i>Ancient History Resources for Teachers</i>
<i>AHB</i>	<i>The Ancient History Bulletin</i>
<i>AHR</i>	<i>American Historical Review</i>
<i>AJA</i>	<i>American Journal of Archaeology</i>
<i>AJAH</i>	<i>American Journal of Ancient History</i>
<i>AJPh</i>	<i>American Journal of Philology</i>
<i>AncSoc</i>	<i>Ancient Society</i>
<i>AncW</i>	<i>The Ancient World</i>
<i>BAGB</i>	<i>Bulletin de l'Association Guillaume Budé</i>
<i>BiZ</i>	<i>Biblische Zeitschrift (Neue Folge)</i>
<i>ByzZ</i>	<i>Byzantinische Zeitschrift</i>
<i>CAH</i>	<i>Cambridge Ancient History</i>
<i>ChHist</i>	<i>Church History</i>
<i>CJ</i>	<i>The Classical Journal</i>
<i>ClassStud</i>	<i>Classical Studies</i>
<i>CLD</i>	<i>Cassell's Latin Dictionary</i>
<i>CPD</i>	<i>Campbell's Psychiatric Dictionary</i>
<i>CPb</i>	<i>Classical Philology</i>
<i>CQ</i>	<i>Classical Quarterly</i>
<i>CR</i>	<i>Classical Review</i>
<i>CSSH</i>	<i>Comparative Studies in Society and History</i>
<i>CTb</i>	<i>Codex Theodosianus</i>
<i>CW</i>	<i>The Classical World</i>

<i>G&amp;R</i>	<i>Greece and Rome</i>
<i>HPTb</i>	<i>History of Political Thought</i>
<i>HSPb</i>	<i>Harvard Studies in Classical Philology</i>
<i>IJCT</i>	<i>International Journal of the Classical Tradition</i>
<i>JAC</i>	<i>Journal of Ancient Civilizations</i>
<i>JbAC</i>	<i>Jahrbuch für Antike und Christentum</i>
<i>JHS</i>	<i>Journal of Hellenic Studies</i>
<i>JRS</i>	<i>Journal of Roman Studies</i>
<i>P&amp;P</i>	<i>Past and Present: a journal of historical studies</i>
<i>PBA</i>	<i>Proceedings of the British Academy</i>
<i>PCPhS</i>	<i>Proceedings of the Cambridge Philological Society</i>
<i>PhilosQ</i>	<i>The Philosophical Quarterly</i>
<i>PLRE</i>	<i>Prosopography of the Later Roman Empire</i>
<i>PG (Migne)</i>	<i>Patrologiae Cursus, series Graeca</i>
<i>RE</i>	<i>Real-Encyclopädie der klassischen Altertumswissenschaft</i> , <sup>2</sup> ed. A. Pauly, G. Wisowa, et al., 1894—
<i>RSA</i>	<i>Rivista storica dell'Antichità</i>
<i>SO</i>	<i>Symbolae Osloenses, auspiciis Societatis Graeco-Latinae</i>
<i>SVF</i>	<i>Stoicorum Veterum Fragmenta</i>
<i>TAPhA</i>	<i>Transactions and Proceedings of the American Philological Association</i>
<i>VChr</i>	<i>Vigiliae Christianae: a review of early Christian life and language</i>

## INTRODUCTION

Who can sleep easy today? Avaricious daughters-in-law and brides are seduced for cash, schoolboys are adulterers. Though talent be wanting, yet indignation will drive me to verse such as I — or any scribbler — can manage. All human endeavours, men's prayers, fears, angers, pleasures, joys and pursuits, make up the mixed mash of my book.

(Juv. 1.77–80, tr. P. Green)

## SUMMARY

This book aims to explore the way in which anger colours and illuminates the extant history of Ammianus Marcellinus. Ammianus' treatment and presentation of this emotion is part of the broader issue of how he manipulates or orders his material. Previous scholars have covered many aspects of Ammianus as a historian, but there has been no extended treatment of his handling of this key emotion. Although it should be pointed out that Robin Seager in his *Seven Studies* does make a partial examination, this book expands upon his much briefer investigation. The goal of this book is to throw light on this important, highly idiosyncratic source for late antiquity, by illustrating Ammianus' portrayal and judgement of anger. Furthermore, this study includes some statistics on other emotions to briefly gauge their relative salience, and compares Tacitus' treatment of anger.



## AMMIANUS AND HIS HISTORY

Ammianus was born c. 330, likely from a well-off family from Antioch. The date of Ammianus' death is unknown.<sup>1</sup> Ammianus, as part of the cultured elite,<sup>2</sup> would have had a background in Greek rhetorical oratory, an essential for all highborn young men who wished to pursue a political or bureaucratic career path. A once widely held view was that Ammianus was from Antioch, and this was due to a contemporary source, Libanius, who wrote a letter to a 'Marcellinus'. John Matthews stated that "the identity of Libanius' correspondent as Ammianus is inescapable" and that Libanius' letter is "the one certain external reference to Ammianus."<sup>3</sup> Ammianus' Antiochian origins have however been contested by historians such as Charles W. Fornara.<sup>4</sup> That Ammianus was a close friend of Libanius has also been cast into doubt by scholars such as Alan Cameron. He asked the question, why would Ammianus meet such a dour reception by the senatorial class at Rome, for surely the esteemed Libanius would have provided him with a letter of introduction to the only literary circle?<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Thompson (1966) 144.

<sup>2</sup> Ammianus' elite status is questioned by Cameron (1964) 16, for there was no inclusion of *v.c.* (*vir clarissimus*) after Ammianus' name in the manuscripts of the *Res Gestae*. However it must be stressed that we do not have in our possession the complete M.S. of Ammianus, and thus this title may have been lost.

<sup>3</sup> Matthews (1989) 8, 454. Matthews (1994) 252 ff., still conforms to the theory that Ammianus was an Antiochean, as supported by the letter from Libanius (*Ep.* 1063 Foerster = 983 Wolf) 'to Marcellinus'. This is presented in defence of his book *The Roman Empire of Ammianus* (1989) for which see Bowersock (1990) 244–250; Fornara (1992) 328–344; and Barnes (1993) 55–70, who criticise the 'accepted' view that Matthews holds.

<sup>4</sup> Fornara (1992), 328–344, followed by Bowersock (1990) 277–284 and Barnes (1993) 55–70. Contra Matthews (1994) 252–269.

<sup>5</sup> Cameron (1964) 15, 19. The view of the letter of Libanius as being addressed to Ammianus Marcellinus was first presented by Seeck (1846), and supported by historians such as Thompson (1947) 18; Pighi (1948) xi; Naudé (1956) 35 f.; and now most recently by Matthews. Barnes points

Ammianus wrote in Latin, however, one famous scholar on Ammianus, E.A. Thompson, was overly very much critical of Ammianus' language, for instance, when he stated of the ancient historian that, "his native Greek shines through it on every page," and that "he often finds it necessary to fall back on the use of Greek words to make his meaning clear."<sup>6</sup> However, this has been contested by Stoian and supported by Heyen, "It can be a question, according to J. Stoian, neither of a simple reference to an ethnic group, nor of an excuse advanced by the author for his more or less awkward use of the Latin language."<sup>7</sup> Joachim Szidat stated that Ammianus' use of Latin was by no means defective, and therefore he should not have needed to fall back on Greek, which he used only to enhance his writings.<sup>8</sup> Thompson also failed to point out that Ammianus was presenting a viewpoint from a particular ethno-social group (i.e. as an upper class Greek). Ammianus' background is debateable and some scholars even suggest that Ammianus had Semitic (Hellenised) origins.<sup>9</sup>

What we do know is that Ammianus retired to Rome in 383/384<sup>10</sup> to write in Latin for a Latin speaking audience an epic history on the scale of Livy,<sup>11</sup> and Tacitus.<sup>12</sup> It was in the Eternal City that he composed, delivered and published (at least in its final

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out that Matthews has refuted the evidence put forward by Fornara amongst others against such a hasty conclusion (1993) 57.

<sup>6</sup> Thompson (1947) 17.

<sup>7</sup> Heyen (1968) 191. Cf. Stoian (1967) 79. For the Greek culture of Ammianus, see Camus (1967) 29ff.

<sup>8</sup> Szidat (1977) 27.

<sup>9</sup> Cf. Heyen (1968) 193.

<sup>10</sup> Humphries (1999) 121. Thompson (1966) 144, states simply that Ammianus settled in Rome sometime after 378. Ammianus' fascination with Rome may account for his never once mentioning the capital of the Empire, Constantinople, by name, Kelly (2003) 588.

<sup>11</sup> Although there are certain resemblances in moral attitudes, *exempla* and values, there is little to suggest that Ammianus borrowed any of Livy's stylisations, Sabbah (2003) 59.

<sup>12</sup> Matthews (1994) 258. Thompson (1969) 121 states that Livy and Sallust cannot be fairly compared with him Drinkwater (1999) 131 agrees with Matthews (1989) 20f. that a significant reason for the move to Rome was for the eastern-based historian to research western history.

phase) his *Res Gestae*.<sup>13</sup> With the resources available to Ammianus in Rome, he was able to link “the present with the past,” so that he could, “illuminate the contemporary state of society.”<sup>14</sup> Rome provided for Ammianus resources to research and document a complete history; it contained the archives of the Empire, such as the *Tabularium principis* and the *Tabularium Senatus*, amongst others.<sup>15</sup> In his own words, Ammianus described Rome as, “a city destined to endure as long as the human race survives,” *victura dum erunt homines Roma* (14.6.3). It was even a city fit for Julian to have been buried in (25.10.5).

From his history it is clear that Ammianus had good patrons and connections. It has often been assumed that Ammianus’ writings were intent on defending the Roman aristocracy and often the aristocratic circle of Symmachus is invoked. However, it is difficult to identify the aristocratic friends of Ammianus.<sup>16</sup> Ammianus was a minor aristocrat, but a ‘foreigner’ to Rome, and never fully accepted into the social circles of Roman upper society. Thus his words at times reflected the scorn he held towards the Roman aristocracy.<sup>17</sup> He was never close enough to the Roman senatorial class to adopt all their views as a whole. His experience of Rome came quite late, when well into his maturity. Therefore: “*Ammien s’est déjà fait, de l’empire et de son personnel, une opinion originale.*”<sup>18</sup> Ammianus was a moralist, thus, when the citizens of Rome behaved in a manner that was beneath them, then they “do not bear in mind where they were born and behave as if they were licensed to indulge in vice and debauchery” (14.6.7). Indeed, Ammianus was critical of the tastes of the Roman aristocrats of his day (14.6; 28.4), not least because of their preference for sensational biography.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> This title is confirmed in the only complete manuscript for the 18 surviving books, the 9<sup>th</sup> century *Fuldensis*, Sabbah (2003) 46, 50.

<sup>14</sup> Mellor (1993) 55.

<sup>15</sup> Sabbah (2003) 53.

<sup>16</sup> See Syme (1968a) 216; Cameron (1964) 15–28.

<sup>17</sup> Hunt (1985) 194.

<sup>18</sup> Heyen (1968) 196, “Ammianus had already made, of the empire and its staff, an original opinion.”

<sup>19</sup> Cf. Rohrbacher (2007) 468–473; Croke (2007) 569.

Ammianus used an authoritative narrative consisting of a pictorial style combined with learned digressions in the classical tradition. The structure of Ammianus' *Res Gestae* is similar in construction to that of previous histories, for there are frequent elements found within his history that relate back to many of the great classical writers. Although, as Sabbah pointed out, the *Res Gestae* does not fit into the category of *Historiae*, as the missing books contained information that was not contemporary with Ammianus; nor can it be classed as *Annales* in its structure. The *Res Gestae* is more an account of things seen and heard, but regardless does not fit into the tradition of *commentarii*.<sup>20</sup> The 'epic' history was out of favour in the late fourth century, the fashion of the time was for biographies, summaries, panegyrics and epitomes. The histories of the Church had differences in style and emphasis, and the great works of the Church were written sixty years before and fifty years after the publication of the *Res Gestae*. The *Historia Augusta* was a contemporary work and competed for the same audience, although the SHA perhaps plagiarised the *Res Gestae*.<sup>21</sup> Ammianus wrote in a period in which autobiography was becoming more popular towards the end of the fourth century.<sup>22</sup> Nevertheless, Ammianus' choice of historiographic form was unique for his era.

Of the original thirty-one books of Ammianus' history, covering the 282 years from the accession of Nerva in 96 to the death of Valens in 378, the first thirteen are lost; therefore, what remains is the account of the period of which Ammianus was a contemporary.<sup>23</sup> The remainder is still a significant body of work, and through Ammianus' eyes we are given a secular narrative of events which revolve around the Late Roman emperors; this covers the second half of the reign of Constantius II (337–361), the relatively brief reign of Julian the Apostate (361–363), Jovian (363–364), Valentinian I (364–375), his brother Valens (364–378),

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<sup>20</sup> Sabbah (2003) 46f.

<sup>21</sup> Sabbah (2003) 60ff. See also Kulikowski (2007) 244, "Most scholars now accept that the *Historia Augusta* belongs to the middle or later 390s and thus postdates the *Res Gestae* of Ammianus, which was probably complete by 391."

<sup>22</sup> "Never before in antiquity had people written so much about themselves in the first person," Sabbah (2003) 64.

<sup>23</sup> Leon (1949) 394; Thompson (1966) 145.

Gratian's reign (367–383) and Valentinian II (375–392). As well as describing the activity of emperors, Ammianus' narrative embraces the Roman soldiery, the Persians and barbarians, various magnates and officials, as well as the *populus*. These descriptions provide a valuable perspective on contemporary society. His narrative ends with the enormous disaster at Adrianople in 378 and its immediate repercussions. As well as being a key moment in history, Sabbah describes the termination at this point as a "farewell to arms."<sup>24</sup>

Probably the most exciting moments of Ammianus' history come when he placed himself in the narrative, and related his own experiences as a *protector domesticus*. It is through being a staff officer that books 14–19 of the *Res Gestae* become quasi-memoirs.<sup>25</sup> His account of the Persian war (books 23–25) is that of a direct participant and observer. It is generally agreed that the episode about the trials at Antioch, further on, is based on the memories and the emotions of an eye-witness. Having the opportunity to observe at close quarters and, beginning in 353, even to be personally involved in the retinue of great men, meant that Ammianus could incorporate important first-hand reports into his History. These were men such as Ursicinus, Master of the Cavalry, under whom Ammianus served as a *protector domesticus*, a regiment of high social standing in the town of Nisibis in Mesopotamia and then to Gaul, and then under the emperor Julian. Ammianus took part in Julian's first campaign on the German frontier in 356, later he was witness to his conduct in Antioch; finally he followed the emperor into the very heart of Persia.<sup>26</sup> Ammianus was certainly a member of the curial class in Antioch, and his curial background is strongly suggested by his negative attitude towards Julian's policy of withdrawing some of the *curiales'* privileges (12.9.12 and 14.4.21).<sup>27</sup> That Ammianus joined the staff of Ursicinus and was made a *protector domesticus* in his twenties, also suggests that he was

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<sup>24</sup> Sabbah (2003) 51.

<sup>25</sup> Sabbah (2003) 50.

<sup>26</sup> Thompson (1966) 144; Sabbah (2003) 52.

<sup>27</sup> Lenski (2002) 274f. For Ammianus' social status and class bias, see Thompson (1947) 2ff. 81, 128ff. Pack (1953a) 80–85; Rosen (1982) 15–22; Matthews (1989) 78–80; Barnes (1990) 62; Fornara (1992) 339–344.

of the elite, as he was unable to attain his rank through military achievement.<sup>28</sup>

Famously at the end of his *Res Gestae*, Ammianus, opinionated and moralistic, described himself “as a soldier and also as a Greek”: *ut miles quondam et graecus* (31.16.9).<sup>29</sup> Through *graecus*, the author consciously positioned himself in the tradition of his Greek predecessors, such as Thucydides and Polybius, who made use of their own examinations and eyewitness accounts to give weight to their versions of contemporary history.<sup>30</sup> Ammianus made much use of his experiences travelling in the army and on his own to add authority to his narrative; in fact, as historians go, only Herodotus could equal Ammianus as a traveller.<sup>31</sup> Thus Ammianus was an eyewitness to many of the events which he recounted, and he stated that he carefully questioned those who witnessed events where he himself was not present in person (15.1.1). Also, Ammianus sometimes revealed the names of those who provided him with information,<sup>32</sup> and he made use of public records, especially while in Rome (16.12.70; 28.1.30).<sup>33</sup>

What added to Ammianus’ *Res Gestae* was his extensive literary knowledge. Ammianus was well versed in the historical and non-historical literature of Greece and Rome and would have been aware of the earlier writings on anger. Part of Ammianus’ effort to preserve and bring to life for posterity the temper of his times involved writing a history that was peppered with emotional terms. His language contained much colourful rhetoric. In his literary style, Ammianus seems perhaps to follow the advice of Plutarch who wrote that: “the best historian is the one who, by a vivid

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<sup>28</sup> See also *et incedendi nimietate iam superarer, ut insuetus ingenuus*, 19.8.6.

<sup>29</sup> Cf. for the controversy surrounding this description: Heyen (1968) 191–196; Stoian (1967) 73–81; Rowell (1964) 31.

<sup>30</sup> Schepens (2007) 39. Cf. for the epilogue of Ammianus, e.g. Kelly (2007) 474–480.

<sup>31</sup> Thompson (1966) 144.

<sup>32</sup> Thompson (1947) 20–21.

<sup>33</sup> Cf. Barnes (1998) 66; Matthews (1989) 454–464.

representation of emotions and characters, makes his narrative like a painting" (*Mor.* 346).<sup>34</sup>

We can learn much about Ammianus by focusing on his treatment of anger. Anger is not the most frequent emotion portrayed by Ammianus. The most recurrent emotion is fear.<sup>35</sup> Anger ranks second, but is no less significant for it had constructive and destructive aspects. Anger lay behind many of the decisions and actions of the individuals and groups Ammianus describes. Anger shaped lives and events in a way that no other emotion could, for often anger hid and reduced other emotions, especially fear. The individuals and groups affected by anger often acted out of character. The power of anger came not only from its control — i.e. the deliberate use of anger, either feigned or exaggerated, used to manipulate others — but often through the lack of control, so that anger, unleashed, created demands or was focussed to attack enemies in an unexpectedly audacious way.

Today there is an enormous quantity of books, articles and even journals dedicated to the subject of anger, from the psychological, to the sociological, the biological and the philosophical, to name some of the most important areas of research. The purpose of this book does not require a thorough analysis of such scholarship;<sup>36</sup> but examining the portrayal of anger in Ammianus is one path to better understanding the historian's perspectives and values.<sup>37</sup>

This research aims to contribute to a greater depth of understanding of the role of the key emotion of anger within the individual and collective lives of the characters, as portrayed by Ammianus, and how he used it to influence the reader and colour his narrative. That the characters within the *Res Gestae* are constructs of Ammianus is true to a certain extent, in that he brings historical figures to life in a way that often resembles a novel. Their passions are brought to life through a combination of Ammianus'

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<sup>34</sup> Cf. Auerbach (1953) 55 on Ammianus, "Everywhere human emotion and rationality yield to the magically and sombrely sensory, to the graphic and the gestural."

<sup>35</sup> See Chapter 1.

<sup>36</sup> Interesting works include, Kassinove & Tafrate (2002); Svitil (2005).

<sup>37</sup> Heyen (1968) 193.

own internalisation — i.e. the long-term process of consolidating and embedding one's own beliefs, attitudes, and values, when it comes to moral behaviour<sup>38</sup> — and projection — i.e. a defence mechanism in which an individual projects his or her own unpleasant feelings onto someone else, and blames them for having thoughts that the individual really has.<sup>39</sup> Ammianus, like Tacitus, professed to be able to see into the very thoughts of individuals, some of whom he knew personally; individuals who both controlled or were at times controlled by anger.

Current research on Ammianus is increasing in its variety and scope, especially in non-English speaking countries. The Late Roman Empire was a vast and extremely heterogeneous entity, containing people temperamentally diverse and culturally conditioned to evaluate and manifest emotions in very different ways. One cannot hope to regard Ammianus as the accurate reproducer of all this kaleidoscopic diversity. However, one *can* hope to conclude, from his treatment of anger, how it matched the thoughts of people like Aristotle, Cicero and Seneca, and how Ammianus wanted the individual and collective characters of his history to be perceived, thereby revealing much about his own beliefs and values.<sup>40</sup> Consequently this makes this task a difficult but, in the end, a more rewarding one.

### ANGER WORDS USED BY AMMIANUS

Anger brings forth all sorts of responses from the angered and from those directly and indirectly affected by this often extremely powerful emotion.<sup>41</sup> To understand anger, its cause and effects, and how they manifest in Ammianus' narrative, it is necessary to first

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<sup>38</sup> For in depth analyses of this topic, see Meissner (1981); Schafer (1990).

<sup>39</sup> For this field of enquiry, see for example the collection in Sandler (1987); Cramer (2006).

<sup>40</sup> However, there were discrepancies within Ammianus' text, see Sabbah (2003) 46. Cf. Pauw (1977) 191; Blockley (1988) 249.

<sup>41</sup> Cf. Shay's study on the effects on the emotional lives of soldiers in the Vietnam War: "Long-term obstruction of grief and failure to communalize grief can imprison a person in endless swinging between rage and emotional deadness as a permanent way of being in the world"; Shay (1994) 40.



identify and discuss the anger words used by Ammianus. Ammianus incorporated a variety of terms that indicated anger, such as *ira*, *irascor*, *effero* and *indignatio*, to name but a few. These terms were chosen carefully, for example, *indignatio* had, for rhetorical theorists, an emotional power in oratory, and rousing the *indignatio* of an audience was a powerful rhetorical device.<sup>42</sup> Carefully coloured and structured, with just the right emphasis, meant that the purposeful vividness of historiographic accounts, such as Ammianus' *Res Gestae*, led the intended audience into having no recourse, they had to respond emotionally.

We cannot know precisely what the author felt, but through his accounts we can respond vicariously to the emotions that he transmitted and appeared to personally feel.<sup>43</sup> His words in the original Latin, such as *indignatio*, would have been incorporated in order to grab his audience's attention and make them feel the way that he wanted them to feel, for these emotions helped represent to them the rhetorical "truth" of the author's perceptions. The awareness of the emotional impact of certain words made Ammianus incorporate them into his *Res Gestae*, in order to give his work a wider emotional impact; thus some references to anger must be an inevitable part of the historical record.

Interestingly and, perhaps surprisingly, when looking at individuals, it was the emperor Julian who exhibited anger the most in Ammianus' narrative. *Ira* is the term used most often to describe the anger of Julian. Julian's anger was at times justified, for example when besieged at Sens in 353 he grew furious because he did not have adequate troops to assail the enemy with and consequently was seen grinding his teeth with rage (*ira exundante substridens*) (16.4.2).

In the majority of instances, Ammianus did not view Julian's exhibition of *ira* as justified anger. For example, in 363, when Julian learned that the Persians had attacked three squadrons of the Roman cavalry and discovered that the standards had not been adequately protected, he became furiously angry (*ira*). He subsequently rushed to the scene with a number of his men and

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<sup>42</sup> Woodman (1983) 145f.

<sup>43</sup> Cf. MacMullen (2003) 6.

forced the two surviving tribunes to be cashiered and the ten soldiers that had fled from the field were put to death (24.3.2).<sup>44</sup>

The term *ira* was, for the Roman military, a manly virtue,<sup>45</sup> which when exhibited at the right occasions enhanced the prestige of the Roman forces through their valour and their support of their leaders. By far *ira* was the most frequent term used by Ammianus to describe their anger. The righteous anger of the Roman military helped to unite the forces, forming them into a homogeneous combat team. For example, when the Isaurians were attempting to take Seleucia, three legions were deployed against them, and by striking their shields with their spears the Romans were able to stir up their own wrath and resentment (*qui habitus iram pugnantium concitat et dolorem*) which served to intimidate their enemies (14.2.17).<sup>46</sup>

The Germanic Alamanni also had the effect of rousing the *ira* of the Romans. The Alamanni's deviousness was said to have incited *ira militum* and the desire for the just dues that came from victory. This was apparent in 357 when the Roman soldiers became so furious at their enemy (*ira quisque percitus armatorum urebat*) that they burnt their fields (17.10.6).

*Ira* was not limited to Romans, for Ammianus used the term twice to describe the battle rage of barbarians (16.12.44, 16.12.49). However, the most frequent word that he used to describe their rage was *furor*. For Ammianus, *furor* was not simply blind rage, but rather controlled and justified rage used effectively to counteract very real threats. For example in 359 when the Romans threatened the Limigantes, their response was a desperate suicidal resistance to the Romans. The Limigantes were unable to resist the fury of their enemy (*furori resistentes hostili*) and were consequently defeated (19.11.15).<sup>47</sup>

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<sup>44</sup> Other instances of Julian's unjust *ira* are apparent at 22.13.2; 22.14.2; 23.2.4; 24.5.7; 24.5.10.

<sup>45</sup> References to women are rare in Ammianus, and when women are mentioned, direct references to their anger are not.

<sup>46</sup> The use of *ira* to demonstrate the righteous anger of the Roman military occurs at 16.12.52; 17.10.6; 17.13.9; 17.13.15; 19.5.8; 19.11.14; 21.13.16; 24.2.5; 24.4.20; 25.3.6; 25.3.10; 26.9.3.

<sup>47</sup> Ammianus used *furor* to describe the rage of barbarians at 16.12.46; 17.13.7; 18.2.14; 31.13.10.

Interestingly, *ira* was also the term most commonly associated with the anger of the Persian king Sapor. With the other Persian kings and Persian soldiers it appeared only once. With Sapor, *ira* appears four times (19.1.6, 19.8.1, 20.7.3, 25.8.13). When Sapor exhibited his *ira*, it was because he was convinced that he was justified in his rage. This came through, for example, in 359, when Sapor was bursting with anger and resentment (*ira et dolore*) at the Romans who were steadfastly holding Amida, a city he felt he should justly conquer (19.8.1).<sup>48</sup>

Furthermore, Ammianus had occasion to associate anger with madness in his text. For example, of the Caesar Gallus he wrote, “And now, when the approach of intestine disaster was being heralded in trumpet-tones, the frenzy of Gallus, whose disturbed mind (*turbidum saeviebat ingenium*) could no longer apprehend the truth, began to emerge from its hitherto latent state...” (14.7.21). And in 363 the emperor Julian raged when the senate pointed out that he could not lower the price of commodities at that time, and as a consequence of his fury (*saeviens*) he composed a biting satire (the *Misopogon*) against them (22.14.2).<sup>49</sup>

Madness was at times associated with the gnashing of teeth, especially in regards to the barbarians. Ammianus made much of his descriptions of the Germans when he recorded the savage grinding of their teeth (*frendentes*) and more than their usual fury (*saevientium*). Even their eyes were possessed of a kind of madness (*furor*) as they ferociously faced the Roman forces (16.12.36).

*Rabies* was a form of anger strongly associated with madness and frenzy. It was also an emotional state that Ammianus often attributed to barbarians. This was apparent, for example, with the Isaurians, who, with greater fury (*rabie saeviore*), were determined to destroy Seleucia, which was held by Roman legions (14.2.14). The Austoriani were also no strangers to *rabies* when they felt threatened and when filled with vengeance they were said to have

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<sup>48</sup> For other examples of Sapor’s righteous *ira*, see 19.1.6; 20.7.3; 25.8.13.

<sup>49</sup> The other imperial figure who exhibited *saevio* was Valens, 29.1.27, 31.14.5.

burst forth from their lairs like mad beasts (*ferarum similes rabie*) (28.6.4).<sup>50</sup>

From this very brief discussion of the anger words used by Ammianus we can determine to an extent the emphasis he placed on certain terms in relation to certain subjects. Ammianus was consciously determining the impact of emotion words and he did not apply them recklessly or without fore-thought. This is perhaps the most significant finding in this study.

## THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND METHODS

This study deals with the emotion of anger and the implications it has for understanding the work of Ammianus. The first step was to collect instances of key words that denote anger from a lexicon and thereby create a sample. Making the study keyword based reduced the need to make (possibly erroneous) inferences about whether it was really anger or some related emotion that was present in Ammianus' narrative. The references to anger were grouped according to the specific groups or individuals who experienced the emotion.

The next step was to examine each group of references to ascertain what the cause and, if present, manifestation was, what the consequences were for those involved, both directly and indirectly, and how, exactly, Ammianus chose to portray that particular event. The results of this content analysis were summarised in tables, where figures indicated relative salience or blank spaces could speak volumes. Although the blank spaces exist and are important, they cannot be covered fully in this examination.

Content analysis provides a means of assessing a particular emotion in Ammianus. It generates useful and reliable data that permit inferences and avoids the pitfalls of an impressionistic approach. Before we continue, a brief look into content analyses is required. The term 'content analysis' can be summarised as "a research tool in mass communication,"<sup>51</sup> or "a research technique for the objective, systematic, and quantitative description of the

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<sup>50</sup> Others who exhibited *rabies* were the emperor Valens, 29.1.27 and the Caesar Gallus, 14.1.10.

<sup>51</sup> Butt & Thorp (1963) 1, as quoted in Bloch (1968) 136.

manifest content of communication.”<sup>52</sup> This method is defined by Carney as follows:

It involves three stages: (1) questions; (2) pull-out of data; (3) inferences. (1) involves deciding on questions appropriate to data at hand; this involves clarification of definitions of key terms and working assumptions, as well as decisions on sampling (what parts of which documents to consider); (2) involves units of analysis (words, themes, characters, interactions), contextual units (settings for the former), categories for registering these (pro/con; early/late, etc.); quantification problems; (3) involves stepping from statistics compiled in (2) to conclusions.<sup>53</sup>

Content analyses can be applied to a vast range of source documents. Carney (1972) reported analyses of Roman coin themes and their constituent metals during the reign of certain emperors. These examinations reached further into the study of history,<sup>54</sup> and could be applied equally well to a study of anger in Ammianus.

The chapters have been devoted separately to the examination of emperors, magnates and collective groups. These sections have made use of the information gathered in the analyses as discussed above. The emperors are of particular importance because of their power and influence. One word could mean disaster for an individual or perhaps even for a population. A good emperor would use moderation in ruling and warfare; a bad or inexperienced emperor could be governed by vehement emotions such as anger, rather than reason.<sup>55</sup> The groups that are discussed include everyone from the emperor's own family, his court, generals and officers, to the general population, both rural and urban. A number of these were particularly bound by the emperor's whims, his moods and, of course, his emotions.

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<sup>52</sup> Berelson (1952) 18.

<sup>53</sup> Carney (1968) 137.

<sup>54</sup> Gustafson (1998) 39–44.

<sup>55</sup> For this conception, see Fisher (2002).

## ANCIENT AND MODERN VIEWS ON ANGER

It is not easy to define in what manner and with what people and on what sort of grounds and how long one ought to be angry; and in fact we sometimes praise men who err on the side of defect in this matter and call them gentle, sometimes those who are quick to anger and style them manly. However, we do not blame one who diverges a little from the right course, whether on the side of the too much or of the too little, but one who diverges more widely, for his error is noticed. Yet to what degree and how seriously a man must err to be blamed is not easy to define on principle. For in fact no object of perception is easy to define; and such questions of degree depend on particular circumstances, and the decision lies with perception.

(Arist *Eth. Nic.* 1109b)

Modern historians tend to steer clear of the study of emotions when explaining events, for emotions can be both masked by the individual and unjustifiably imputed by observers. Emotions have been seen as purely irrational and non-cognitive; therefore they do not fit in with an analytical approach to historical events, even though they clearly motivate much human behaviour. Often only the person feeling the emotion knows it to exist, so emotions are most commonly beyond the reach of historical enquiry. An emotion such as anger elicits all sorts of responses from the angered and from those directly and indirectly affected by the expression of it.<sup>56</sup> Anger, in all its forms, can be “hard to describe and analyse,”<sup>57</sup> and therefore there is still much controversy about emotions.<sup>58</sup>

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<sup>56</sup> ‘Bottling up’ of emotions can lead to severe physiological and emotional consequences.

<sup>57</sup> Harris (2001) 21.

<sup>58</sup> Anger affects human beings both physically and psychologically and is one of our most primal survival instincts. Anger involves first an assessment of a situation, then after the initial appraisal comes the physiological responses to anger, which may include a rush of adrenalin, an increase in breathing rate, rapid heartbeat, a rise in blood pressure and an increase in testosterone levels in men. The increase in forehead temperature creates a reddening in the face, which has been noted since

Today the study of emotions is a vigorous field of research. In recent years, the passions in ancient sources were studied by classicists such as Martha Nussbaum, David Konstan, and Susanna Braund, who in 2003 called for examinations such as these.<sup>59</sup> This book also owes a debt to these forerunners, including William Harris' *Restraining Rage: the Ideology of Anger Control in Classical Antiquity* (2002).

### Anger in Antiquity

Historians in antiquity were well aware of the effects emotion had on their subjects, and used reports of these sometimes imputed reactions to portray their characters in both positive and negative ways.<sup>60</sup> Anger was an important subject for debate in all the foremost philosophical schools.<sup>61</sup> There were many treatises on anger in ancient times; works known by title include those by Philip of Opus, Antipater, Posidonius, Plutarch, Sotion (the teacher of Seneca), Bion of Borysthenes and Melanthius of Rhodes. The surviving works are Philodemus, *On Anger*;<sup>62</sup> Seneca, *On Anger*; Plutarch, *On Freedom from Anger*; Libanius, *On the Control of Anger*; Gregory of Nazianzus, *Against Anger*; and Lactantius, *On the Anger of God*.<sup>63</sup> At some point in their works, all of these authors discussed anger control.<sup>64</sup>

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ancient times, Potegal (2005) 215. Cf. Lakoff (1987) 407. Lastly, our final response to emotion is the 'action readiness'; whether "to flee, strike, freeze, try harder, or do something new," Rosenwein (2002) 836.

<sup>59</sup> Braund & Most (2003) 3, for further reading on the emotions in classics, see for example: Brunschwig & Nussbaum (1993); Nussbaum (1994); (2001). Konstan (1994), (1997), (2001); Konstan & Rutter (2003a); Braund & Gill (1997); Braund (1988).

<sup>60</sup> Cf. Helmbold in Plutarch's *Moralia* (1939) 91.

<sup>61</sup> Galinsky (1988) 328.

<sup>62</sup> Philodemus' *On Frank Criticism* and *On Anger* are epitomes from the lectures of Zeno of Sidon (c.155–c.75 BC), who taught in Athens. The works are partially preserved as papyri found in Herculaneum, Knuuttila (2004) 84, n. 202.

<sup>63</sup> Knuuttila (2004) 65, n.153.

<sup>64</sup> For a detailed discussion on anger control in antiquity, see Harris (2001).

A key question in studying or portraying anger is whether it is appropriate or does it go too far? This moral dilemma appears very early on in European literature, in Homer's *Iliad*. The poem begins with this line, "Sing, O goddess, the anger of Achilles son of Peleus that brought countless ills upon the Achaeans" (1.1). The major theme of the *Iliad* is Achilles' response to an eventual subsidence from the emotion of anger. For many characters in the poem, including Achilles, anger had disastrous consequences, but it also forced people's hands by creating a momentum, for good or for ill. At first, Achilles' anger could be termed righteous, but then his anger went to a terrible extreme, leading him to drag Hector's body around the walls of Troy. It was only when he put his anger aside with Priam that he realised the equal humanity of his enemy.<sup>65</sup>

In this period of European culture, anger was acceptable and expected in response to situations that threatened the honour of the ruler or aristocratic hero, as well as their companions and relatives.<sup>66</sup> Pertinent to assessing Achilles' anger is the cognitive element in that emotion, in which the exercise of reasoned judgement weighs the response to a provocation.<sup>67</sup> To the ancient Greeks and Romans, the extreme anger shown by characters such as the vengeful Aeneas against Turnus was anything but out of place. For Galinsky, the final scene of the *Aeneid* where Aeneas exacted his angry revenge on Turnus, "is rooted not in abstract ideology, but in real life, practice, and custom."<sup>68</sup> The Romans saw this action as Aeneas' right, a reasonable emotional response. Nevertheless, neither the *Iliad* nor the *Aeneid* are unqualified endorsements of anger. Achilles and Aeneas were suffering from

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<sup>65</sup> Nussbaum (1994) 404.

<sup>66</sup> Koziak (1999) 1071; Harris (2001) 25. The extent to which the pagan gods interfered and directed the lives of mortals has been much discussed by modern scholars, see for example Adkins (1960). See also a study of Epicurean concepts on anger and gods in Nussbaum (1994) 251 ff.

<sup>67</sup> For anger and laughter as the "two most rational faculties of human intellect," see Milton (1641) preface. Anger is cognitive, as it is "a combination of external protest and warning that follows on an aroused state which began by informing us internally that damage or injury has just taken place, much as pain notifies us of an injury to the body," Fisher (2002) 195.

<sup>68</sup> Galinsky (1988) 327.



arduous and trying circumstances and reacted accordingly, but their anger had disastrous results.<sup>69</sup>

Though there was some endorsement of justifiable anger, ancient authors tended to see anger as a very negative emotion, especially when it was exhibited by those in positions of power, or even in the portrayals of gods.<sup>70</sup> Because of its wild, aggressive aspect, Galen, the second century AD physician, was particularly critical of anger and described a scene in which a young man became furious when he was unable to open a door. His very description of the descent into madness of the frustrated young man caused in Galen a great hatred of anger (*Nat. Fac.* 38).<sup>71</sup>

Seneca, who shared a similar viewpoint, stated that, “(Anger is) the most hideous and frenzied of all the emotions” (*De ira* 1.1.5). Further on, he described anger as “an ugly and horrible picture of distorted and swollen frenzy — you cannot tell whether this vice is more execrable or more hideous.” Seneca described an attack of anger as follows:

His eyes blaze and sparkle; his face is red all over as the blood surges up from the lowest depths of the heart; his lips tremble, his teeth are clenched, his hair bristles and stands on ends, his forced breath makes a creaking sound, his joints make a cracking sound from twisting; he moans and bellows, his speech bursts out in hardly comprehensible words; he keeps striking his hands together and stamps the ground with his feet.

(*De ira* 1.1.3–5, tr. Nussbaum (1994) 393)

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<sup>69</sup> In Aeneas’ case, this was for Turnus. Aeneas had exacted his righteous revenge on Turnus and dealt him a terrible wound. Turnus was ready to relinquish all he had to Aeneas, but Aeneas deemed it not enough and with terrible fury executed the prince, Verg. *Aen.* 12.952.

<sup>70</sup> Indeed Virgil *Aen.* 1.11 attributed unworthy passions unto the gods, *tantaene animis caelestibus irae?*

<sup>71</sup> This passage has been proved a fiction, cf. Harris (2001) 12. Nevertheless, it does not necessarily lose its importance, for it revealed a commonly held view and “was a good way of suggesting the absurdity of the angry,” Harris (2001) 12.

The general Stoic rule was to judge anger as justified if it punished the aggressor (*SVF* 3.397).<sup>72</sup> We find this view in Ammianus when he narrates that the Roman army “annihilated” the Sarmatians in 358 through the aid of wrath and valour, *ira et virtus*, after their savage attack upon the Romans (17.13.15). As always, the task is to distinguish justified from unjustified anger. This is perhaps due to the understanding that anger is at its most dangerous and destructive when it distances an individual from another’s humanity, and, equally, diminishes the individual’s own humanity,<sup>73</sup> making it possible to inflict cruel punishments. This issue caused men such as Seneca much torment and concern.

In the *Nicomachean Ethics* it is quite clear that Aristotle did not always view anger in the same distasteful way that Galen or Seneca viewed it. When he discussed restraint within emotions, Aristotle wrote, “Let us now consider the point that unrestraint in anger is less disgraceful than unrestraint in the desires” (*Eth. Nic.* 1149a25–1149b27).<sup>74</sup> He also wrote that anger needed to be directed towards a particular person and one who could be slighted in return, “For no one grows angry with a person on whom there is no prospect of taking vengeance, and we feel comparatively little anger, or none at all, with those who are much our superiors in power” (*Rh.* 1.11).<sup>75</sup>

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<sup>72</sup> The desire of the angered individual to do damage to the aggressor was also part of Epicurean belief, Nussbaum (1994) 243. According to Sorabji (2000) the Stoic conceptions of fear and anger are said to involve some kind of contraction or expansion. This is seen in Cicero, *Tusculan Disputations* 4.15; Galen, *PHP* 3.1.25 (172.20–26), 3.5.43–4 (208.22–31); and Plutarch, *On Moral Virtue* (*Moralia*, vol. vi) 449a.

<sup>73</sup> Cf. Nussbaum (1994) 403.

<sup>74</sup> He also believed that anger derived from “sickness or poverty or love or thirst or any other unsatisfied desires” (*Rh.* 2.2). However, this greatly limits its legitimacy.

<sup>75</sup> In a modern democracy widespread anger in the electorate can be shown towards the government by voting them out of office. The forms of slight that Aristotle lists are contempt, spite, and insult. “In Attic law *hybris* (insulting, degrading treatment) was a more serious offence than *aikia* (bodily ill-treatment). It was the subject of a State criminal prosecution...The penalty was assessed in court, and might even be death,” as quoted in Fisher (2002) 183. For a psychological analysis of Aristotle’s examples of anger in the *Rhetoric*, see Stocker and Hegeman

Thus for Aristotle, anger always had an individual as an object (e.g. *Rh.* 2.4.31). Indeed, this theory of anger as objective is discussed further on by modern behaviourists. Aristotle also believed that those who do not retaliate against an aggressor through a display of righteous anger were foolish, and held a poor sense of their own worth (*Eth. Nic.* 1126a3–8).<sup>76</sup> Homer had spoken of Achilles' pleasure at seeking revenge, for which it was "sweeter by far than trickling honey" (*Il.* 18.109). Seneca on the other hand, did not endorse revenge when it was associated with anger. For being ardent and frenzied, "(anger) blocks its own progress to the goal toward which it hastens" (*De ira* 1.12.5). Aristotle also spoke of anger as being associated with pleasure — a concept that Seneca certainly did not share.<sup>77</sup> For when anger leads to revenge, said Aristotle, there is pleasure in seeking and achieving that revenge (*Rh.* 1.11). Nevertheless, there is much more to anger than seeking revenge and perhaps Aristotle had not taken into account mild annoyances, and anger that is, or should be, quelled rapidly.

In antiquity, royal or tyrannical anger was notorious. Stemming from fifth-century Athens there were writings and plays that depicted this in depth.<sup>78</sup> Herodotus, writing in the mid fifth-century, condemned angry rulers, such as the Persian king Cambyses, who killed the son of his courtier Prexaspes (3.34–35). Certainly, royal anger was so disreputable that it was seen as almost immoral for those in positions of power to show this emotion, and it was, in fact, often dangerous for them to do so. Seneca related the disastrous effects leaders underwent as a result of their anger (*De ira* 1.2.2), and further on wrote:

But though it is expedient for subjects to control their passions, especially this mad and unbridled one, it is even more expedient for kings. When his position permits a man to do all

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(1996) Chapter 10 "The Complex Evaluative World of Aristotle's Angry Man."

<sup>76</sup> Cf. Nussbaum (1994) 258. (This might be justified insofar as anger turned inwards causes depression. But it is far from Buddhist and Christian precepts.)

<sup>77</sup> Cf. Konstan (2003) 108–109.

<sup>78</sup> E.g. *Oedipus Tyrannus* and the *Bacchae*. Cf. Harris (2001) 229 ff.

that anger prompts, general destruction is let loose, nor can any power long endure which is wielded for the injury of many; for it becomes imperilled when those who separately moan in anguish are united by a common fear.

(*De ira* 3.16.2)

When a leader died through the plots of conspirators or the hands of an assassin, often it was fear of their anger by others that brought about their demise, as Harris pointed out, “What had happened to them was often the consequence of their own anger or their otherwise tyrannical behaviour.”<sup>79</sup> Condemning tyrannical anger was, “part of a struggle to create and foster polis government and the rule of law.”<sup>80</sup> The anger of rulers and even of warriors such as Achilles was very frightening and no doubt this influenced the authors’ responses, for the need to curb their rulers’ anger was of utmost importance to personal safety.<sup>81</sup> However, reporting displays of anger, especially if they were clearly unreasonable, could also be a useful tool when employed to create a negative impression of a ruler. For example, Nero’s angered assault upon his wife Poppaea that resulted in her death (*Tac Ann.* 16.6).

Resentment is closely linked with anger, although it is more delayed and suppressed; it may be behind some of the angry outbursts that Ammianus records, such as at 28.6.19, when the *comes Africae* Romanus was filled with anger and resentment (*ira percitus et dolore*) when Palladius threatened to tell Valentinian of the ashes of the province of Tripolis, which he supposedly caused. Resentment is anger inflamed by a sense of real or imagined personal injury; it often involves a prolonged nursing of a grievance. It is, in principle, the reaction of the mind that is felt instinctively when we believe ourselves to be wronged. Basically, resentment has the same causes as anger but a delayed expression, with the grieved individual often deliberately choosing and planning the time and means of revenge. Being based upon an enduring, unforgiving awareness of an offence, this feeling is difficult to exorcise and leads to bitterness or implacability. Resentment affects people to differing degrees. What can cause for

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<sup>79</sup> Harris (2001) 251.

<sup>80</sup> Harris (2001) 27.

<sup>81</sup> Harris (2001) 28.

one person a passing feeling of annoyance can, in the case of others, result in a grudge that is nursed indefinitely.<sup>82</sup> Thus resentment can have a long incubation period between the cause and its vengeful, often disproportionate, outlet. Resentful individuals are most often to be feared when they suddenly come into positions of power. All of a sudden their built-up resentment is given liberty and invariably turns into revenge towards those who were once their superiors, but now through fate are vulnerable subordinates.<sup>83</sup>

The orator Lysias once said that judges were entitled to use anger when meting out punishments to the accused (12.3).<sup>84</sup> Anger was part of sentencing, for it was a right of the judge to be angry at a person's crimes and to punish them accordingly (Sen. *De ira*: 1.16.6). But in contrast, Seneca warns against letting anger have control over a person's fate, "Tis ill trusting an angry man with a sword" (*De ira*: 1.19.8). However, it seems that Seneca's wise words were not always observed by both Greek and Roman orators who were very conscious of the value of anger in making trial judges and juries indignant, for as Cicero said, "Now the following emotions are the most important for us to arouse with our speech in the hearts of the jurors or of any other audience we address: affection, hate, anger, envy, pity, hope, joy, fear, and grief" (*De Or.* 2.206).<sup>85</sup> Raising an audience's anger was not only a part of oratory, but a part of historiography as well. Part of history's task is to pass judgement and to encourage the audience to follow that judgement.<sup>86</sup> It is therefore apparent that there were times when anger was allowed to be expressed or incited in public, but clearly

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<sup>82</sup> Maranon (1956) 10, based on his opinion of the emperor Tiberius as a resentful man. Cf. Newbold (2001) for his assessment of Tiberius' resentfulness and consequent vengefulness in Tacitus.

<sup>83</sup> Many examples of this can be found throughout history. Those within Germany's Nazi party were particularly notorious. One of the most resentful figures in Ammianus was Romanus, 28.6.19.

<sup>84</sup> Cf. Galinsky (1988) 326 f.

<sup>85</sup> Rhetorical teachings encouraged the orator to use anger in order to influence his audience and thus win his case. Cf. Marincola (2003) 301.

<sup>86</sup> Marincola (2003) 308.

other times when it was deemed inappropriate to do so. As we shall see, Ammianus was very much part of this oratory tradition.

Christianity was also influential in its teachings on anger; even though much of pagan moral philosophy was the basis for Christian tradition, there were ways in which the teachings were different.<sup>87</sup> According to Heggen, anger was supposedly one emotion that was particularly feared by Christians, as it opposed love and kindness.<sup>88</sup> Nevertheless, Heggen clearly has not taken into account the ambiguities of early Christian teachings for, depending upon which were followed, some moralists were of the belief that Christians ought not to completely eliminate anger but to leave it to God, who will take vengeance for him or her (*Romans* 12:19).<sup>89</sup> God's wrath with his chosen people was a recurrent theme throughout the Old Testament.<sup>90</sup> Jesus himself was not completely without anger.<sup>91</sup> Yet some moralists disdained anger absolutely, following Stoic teachings on the passions.<sup>92</sup> At least five Christian moralists wrote dissertations on anger between the 360s and the 430s.<sup>93</sup> These include Basil of Caesarea, whose treatise *Against the Angry*, was written in accordance with his ethical and moralistic writings.<sup>94</sup> Gregory of Nazianzus wrote of the sins of anger, *Adversus iram*.<sup>95</sup> The controversial bishop John Chrysostom

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<sup>87</sup> Harris (2001) 391.

<sup>88</sup> Heggen & Long (1991).

<sup>89</sup> Harris (2001) 394.

<sup>90</sup> E.g. *Exod.* 4.14; *Numb.* 11.1, 11.10, 12.9, 22.22, 25.3, 25.4 etc. Note also that Jahveh was a vengeful god, Elohim a conciliatory one.

<sup>91</sup> For example, when Jesus expelled the traders from the Temple, Matthew 21:12; Luke 19:45 John 2.13–16. Cf. Mark 3.1–6, etc.

<sup>92</sup> Harris (2001) 396. During the fourth and fifth centuries, it appears that anger control became of increased importance — perhaps due to an expansion in urbanisation.

<sup>93</sup> Harris (2001) 125.

<sup>94</sup> In *Ascetical Works*, 455–6, Basil characterised uncontrolled aggression as temporary madness (356B–357A) and distinguished between wrath (*thumos*), a sudden passion, and anger (*orge*), which nurses a grievance (369A), Knuuttila (2004) 128.

<sup>95</sup> Gregory's *Against Anger* follows the same structure as Plutarch's *On Freedom from Anger*. Like Plutarch, Gregory divided his work into a longer

wrote *About Rage and Anger*.<sup>96</sup> The philosopher Nemeseius and John Cassian both wrote shorter works on anger.<sup>97</sup> Christian morality was becoming more influential during this period of great change and unsettled times, and Christian intellectuals were becoming more numerous.<sup>98</sup> Though Christian teachings promoted the notion of ‘turning the other cheek,’ within Ammianus there are notable examples of Christians acting angrily and aggressively and going against their moralist teachings (e.g. 27.3.13).

### Anger in Psychology Today

In the Western tradition emotion was not always perceived to be aroused through an intelligent processing of knowledge, although this view was defended by the Epicureans and the Stoics. For the Epicureans, anger was associated with feelings of heat, swelling and irritation (Phld. 8.20–27).<sup>99</sup> Ammianus also made references to heat when discussing great passions, e.g. the Persians were fired (*ardebant*) with a great desire to destroy Bezabde (20.7.11); and when Maximinus read a letter sent by Probus, the savage man fell into a blaze of anger (*exarsit*) (28.1.33). This ‘traditional’ view has been questioned; much research in recent years is driven by the theory that emotions are cognitive, that is, they “are part of a process of perception and appraisal, not forces striving for release.” No longer do behaviourists (ethologists) only see emotions as irrational manifestations, but rather as the results of cognitive judgements, ‘appraisals,’ by the individual, “about whether something is likely to be good or harmful, pleasurable or painful.”<sup>100</sup> Emotions trigger a response in cognition, which often

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critical description of anger and a collection of further therapeutic advices, Knuuttila (2004) 129.

<sup>96</sup> Cf. Kemp & Strongman (1995) 397–417.

<sup>97</sup> Harris (2001) 125 f.

<sup>98</sup> Harris (2001) 397. Libanius also wrote during the fourth century and wrote about the control of anger from a pagan rhetorical viewpoint, Harris (2001) 124. *Vituperatio irae* (8.315–324). Achilles: 8.282–290. *Orat.* 1.21. 8.235.

<sup>99</sup> Nussbaum (1994) 242. For the Epicurean psychology of anger, see Fowler (1997) 16–35.

<sup>100</sup> Rosenwein (2002) 836.

persists beyond the initial stimulus. On an interpersonal level, emotions allow individuals to interact with their social environment by “producing specific action tendencies,” which assist us through “forming attachments, resolving injustices, negotiating hierarchies, and adhering to social norms.”<sup>101</sup> On this level, emotions assist us by focusing our cognitive processes, memory and judgement upon a perceived threat, prospect or wound.<sup>102</sup> In this respect, emotions such as anger simplify cognitive processing, by reducing “the number of cues used in making judgements.”<sup>103</sup> Anger is directly related to an individual’s cognitive appraisal when one desires to attribute blame, as well as determining the response:

- (1) a desire to blame individuals (projection), (2) tendencies to overlook mitigating details before attributing blame, (3) tendencies to perceive ambiguous behaviour as hostile (paranoia), (4) tendencies to discount the role of uncontrollable factors when attributing causality and (5) punitiveness in response to witnessing mistakes made by others.<sup>104</sup>

Cognitive appraisals of injustice can lead to anger. If the issue is not resolved, the anger can spill over in an effort to resolve the emotion in an alternative form. If the anger is not felt to be fully resolved, it can be directed towards others in the future who may be perceived as able to initiate a similar angry response and escape from justice. In this respect there is the concept that individuals often feel the need to re-establish a sense of justice. Individuals who are especially conscious of the need to establish social order often view future violations of the norm with fewer appraisals as to the cause and focus, and more on the need to actively punish. Their aim becomes one of halting “further erosion of the social order.” As a result, “anger can activate blame cognition as much as blame cognitions can activate anger.”<sup>105</sup>

As suggested earlier, anger can be used very effectively to create fear in a deliberate and calculated manner to control peers

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<sup>101</sup> Goldberg, *et al.* (1999) 782; Lerner (2001) 146.

<sup>102</sup> Goldberg, *et al.* (1999) 782.

<sup>103</sup> Lerner (1998) 563.

<sup>104</sup> Goldberg, *et al.* (1999) 782.

<sup>105</sup> Lerner (1998) 563; Goldberg, *et al.* (1999) 783, 790.



and subordinates alike. Thus something seemingly irrational can have a purpose and control, which is masked by the angry outburst. A rowdy audience, for example, can be brought back into line through a show of anger. Anger can give one a sense of individual control. This controlling of displays of anger is the focus of much current research and discussion. The angry individual will, sometimes or often, express his frustrated aggression upon a subordinate, someone whom he does not feel threatened by.<sup>106</sup> However, he or she will rarely use anger to intimidate or injure an authority figure; rather he will conceal it from them.<sup>107</sup>

Similarly, people in antiquity who were at the very top of society did not have to curb their anger to the same degree as those who were in more subordinate positions, for they had less need to fear reprisals. The Roman emperors and Greek tyrants for example were at the top where, in theory at least, no one, bar the gods, could punish them for a righteous or even an indecent outburst. This can be clearly demonstrated by Herodotus (7.35) of a frustrated King Xerxes beating the Hellespont.<sup>108</sup> Valentinian I is an excellent example of a deplorably irascible emperor. Numerous references to this particular emperor's outbursts sully his reputation, and his excessive irascibility led to so severe an outburst that it actually cost him his life. It was said that at the beginning of his reign, Valentinian sought to keep his savage impulses under control, however, according to Ammianus, they were increasingly released as his reign progressed. For example the emperor was angry (*iracundus*) when he learnt that Hymetius was exiled when he wanted him put to death (28.1.23).

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<sup>106</sup> "At least 2 million women are battered by spouses or intimate acquaintances each year in the United States, most frequently in anger," Dagleish (2004) 1078.

<sup>107</sup> For an empirical study on the nature of this, see Siegman, *et al.* (1987) 127–135. Nevertheless, there are occurrences when inferiors, individually or collectively, do take out their angry aggression upon their superiors, for example at the ballot box, so this is not always a generalisation we can readily make. For a historic example, cf. Beik (1998) 689–691. For modern-day examples, see e.g. Alford (1988) 489–501.

<sup>108</sup> Cf. Harris (2001) 11.

The most feared leader was one who believed that others were constantly out to hurt his position, and exhibited anger freely to counteract his own personal fears. Anger is often driven by the need to offset feelings of vulnerability and helplessness, but also to offset feelings of shame, humiliation, worthlessness, i.e. a denial of one's own shame as one counter-shames.

Not everyone expresses the same emotion to a given stimulus. The experience of emotion is individualistic and varies according to one's predisposition. As well, an emotion can be culturally, socially and gender defined and determined.<sup>109</sup> An individual from one social *habitus*<sup>110</sup> may feel, or be brought up to feel, emotion in a way that is thoroughly different from an individual from another ethnic group. Hence the social constructionist theory, "emotions and their display are constructed, that is, formed and shaped, by the society in which they operate."<sup>111</sup> Causation, manifestation and evaluation of emotions are to a considerable extent culturally determined (it depends to some extent on the particular emotion), but physiological concomitants like pallor, horripilation, elevated heart rate and blood pressure are universal.

Primary emotions<sup>112</sup> such as anger and fear are strongly rooted in our evolution and are genetically based, and thus, according to Hupka, cross-cultural agreement can be expected in some responses to anger.<sup>113</sup> For instance, one cultural difference that does not appear to have a parallel today is the use of the veil to

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<sup>109</sup> For the controversial belief that men tend to experience anger more than women, see Lerner, *et al.* (2003) 144–150. For an opposite view, that women may experience all the range of emotions more than men, cf. Mirowsky & Ross (1995) 449–468.

<sup>110</sup> Bourdieu (1977) 72ff. Cf. id (1990), for his updated definition of *habitus*.

<sup>111</sup> Rosenwein (2002) 837. Cf. Harré (1986).

<sup>112</sup> Anger is classified as a primary or 'basic' emotion. Secondary emotions that stem from anger are acquired through socializing agents that are defined and labelled while the individual is experiencing the autonomic reactions of the primary emotion, Kemper (1987) 263. For the controversies over primary or 'basic' emotions, cf. Parrott (2001); Ortony & Turner (1990) 315–331.

<sup>113</sup> Hupka, *et al.* (1997) 3. However, for a study showing anger and other primary emotions as culture specific, see Mandal, *et al.* (1996) 49–58.

signify that the wearer was feeling anger, which apparently was acceptable practice in ancient Greece (Ar. *Ran.* 911–913).<sup>114</sup> The veiling of oneself meant that the face was concealed. Therefore, the emotional reaction which was evident on the features of a person who has felt him or herself to be publicly humiliated is concealed (e.g. Hdt. 6.67 & Eur. *Med.* 1144–1155). Thus through veiling and hiding oneself an individual is attempting to make him or herself feel less vulnerable.<sup>115</sup> Withdrawal from public is akin to veiling, where one is concealing their emotions and vulnerability from public view. This is evident in the *Iliad* when, for example, Achilles withdrew and did not kill Agamemnon on the spot in his anger (1.189–221).<sup>116</sup> By such an act of withdrawal to register one's anger, the individual displaces him or herself from the public in an effort to spare others the full force of the emotion.<sup>117</sup> Anger *can* be controlled.<sup>118</sup>

Anger as an aggressive emotional response to a stimulus can range from an explosive outburst to a mild irritation, and the manner of its expression varies with the individual.<sup>119</sup> Anger has a variety of origins and can be over-determined, therefore it is a frequent challenge to pinpoint the initial factor or group of factors which led to the ultimate physical signs and expressions, visual or otherwise (e.g. sound, tone of voice, etc.), of anger. Nevertheless, anger can often be quelled by a simple apology, as the aim of anger is often a correction in the behaviour of others and the acknowledgement that the other has given offence.

The determinants for anger include:

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<sup>114</sup> Cf. Cairns (2001) 19.

<sup>115</sup> Nussbaum (1994) 92.

<sup>116</sup> Cairns (2001) 20, 25. Cf. Hom *Il.* 1.306–307, 327–330, 348–350, 488–492; 9.356–363, 428–429, 650–655, 682–692; 16.61–63.

<sup>117</sup> Cairns (2001) 21. Other ways the ancient Greeks showed their anger was through silence and avoiding eye contact, 23.

<sup>118</sup> In modern society, anger can be controlled through anger management programmes, therapy, prescription medications, etc.

<sup>119</sup> Yarcheski, *et al.* (1999).

1. a response to an accumulation of stress;
2. a sense of betrayal, when there is an acute awareness of disappointment;<sup>120</sup>
3. a response to righteous indignation;<sup>121</sup>
4. anxiety, where anger seeks to mask or displace feelings of shame or helplessness;<sup>122</sup>
5. depression, which may itself be a sign of anger turned inwards;
6. a learnt response to certain situations. In these circumstances, anger can be triggered on the subconscious level by “seemingly innocuous stimuli.”<sup>123</sup> In such a case, an individual may feel a surge of anger, but not be entirely sure as to the cause, for it may be buried deep in his or her subconscious — such as occurs with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder.<sup>124</sup> There is, therefore, little chance that an observer of such anger will understand its real cause.<sup>125</sup>

Compared with antiquity, modern thinking on anger reveals both continuity and discontinuity. Ancient historians have, like orators, used emotions as rhetorical devices to add colour and vividness to their narratives, and they used the rhetorical test of plausibility to justify their insertion. Unlike some modern historians, they were less diffident about explaining political and military events in terms of affect. They freely imagined emotional scenes complete with the physiological signs that accompanied them. When we relate this to Ammianus we see that he too used a sophistic approach to portray his characters imbued with emotions. The barbarians raged with grinding teeth, the emperors fumed, the soldiers bellowed their outrage. Not always is the emotion portrayed in a negative sense however, but the historian is aware at

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<sup>120</sup> This disillusionment can often lead to the desire for revenge and retribution.

<sup>121</sup> 2 and 3 can be hard to separate.

<sup>122</sup> Cf. Yarcheski, *et al.* (1999) 317, “Anger is an immediate, protective response to the helplessness associated with anxiety.”

<sup>123</sup> Mayne & Ambrose (1999) 355.

<sup>124</sup> A huge corpus exists on PTSD. See for example Dalgleish (2004).

<sup>125</sup> Yarcheski, *et al.* (1999). Cf. Gottschalk & Gleser (1969) 62 ff; Galinsky (1988) 321.

all times of the possibility of negative outcomes for those who vented too fiercely. There was sometimes a fine line between the acceptability of showing anger or suppressing it, and the historian frequently made value judgements accordingly. That his predecessors influenced these portrayals can be determined to an extent, as many of these depictions were rhetorically enhanced generalisations and were repeated throughout historical writings. Ammianus was aware of history and deliberately presented himself as part of that tradition.

### ANGER, AMMIANUS AND PREVIOUS SCHOLARSHIP

Valuable for the scholarship on Ammianus is Robin Seager's *Ammianus Marcellinus: Seven Studies in his Language and Thought* (1986), because of the depth of understanding of Ammianus' character portrayals, as well as for the uses of anger he unearths. Seager cites some of the instances of anger in the *Res Gestae*, and this book will build upon these instances through providing further examples and discussion. As well as discussing the use of certain words by other fourth-century writers, Seager also makes a brief comparison between anger in Ammianus and Tacitus (42). Regarding the use of certain anger terms, it is possible to surmise whether or not the changes in the empire dictated this or whether this was simply a literary choice of the different authors. Seager's chapters are concerned with the use of language by Ammianus concerning the following themes: moderation and excess; moderate virtues and their contraries; lack of self-control, savagery and madness; caution, prudence and sobriety; sedition and disturbance; adulation; and imperial power.

Seager's Chapter 2, "Some Kindred Virtues and Vices," which deals in part with anger, understands it to be a vice, a vice which leads to excess so that it is consequently condemned (33). When discussing the anger of the emperor Julian, Seager points out the critical attitude of Ammianus towards it (34). This is very much apparent when Julian stormed out of the city of Antioch and disregarded the people's hopes that he would prove more agreeable upon his return (23.2.4). As Seager (35) stated, "In the field anger may act as a valid inspiration to the troops, but it is sharply criticized in their commanders, Roman or foreign," especially if it

threatens the discipline and cohesion of the troops (35).<sup>126</sup> It is hard to ignore the emotional element in the portrayal of events that Ammianus incorporated to enhance his historiography. The historian often felt compelled to exaggerate incidents, which was a technique used to incite his audience to a “proper” emotional response. As Seager stated in Chapter 3, “The Rhetoric of Excess,” “Ammianus is fascinated by extreme behaviour of every kind and by responses to situations which are in themselves extreme. Such behaviour is often described in language which signals an absence or loss of self-control.” (43)<sup>127</sup> Thus these portrayals became vivid scenes that dramatised events, taking the reader into a world full of colourful excess. Seager’s work on anger is important, but brief and to the point, thus it was unable to explore the consequences, manifestations and extent that this book is able to undertake.

Another scholar whose work is significant to the scholarship on Ammianus and emotions is the German author A. Brandt, who in 1999 published his work, *Moralische Werte in den Res Gestae des Ammianus Marcellinus*, which detailed Ammianus’ own moral attitudes and beliefs.<sup>128</sup> Brandt focused on the virtues and vices that are so apparent in Ammianus’ epitomes of the emperors. One facet of Brandt’s work that is particularly significant is that he discussed the relationship between the histories of Tacitus and Ammianus and saw the similarities between the styles of each author which to him appear frequently. For example, the two authors shared a deep held similarity in that they deplored on many occasions the *saevitia* of their protagonist (157). Furthermore, Brandt pointed out that Ammianus saw, “a difference between the inclination towards cruel behaviour (*saevire*) and the inclination towards outbreaks of anger (*irasci*).”<sup>129</sup> Further emphasising Brandt’s point, he demonstrated in regards to Valens that, “he was so implacably cruel that he could

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<sup>126</sup> For *ira militum* and the like, cf. 15.12.2, 16.12.52, 17.10.6, 13.9, 15, 19.5.8, 11.14, 20.4.16, 7.15, 21.13.16, 24.2.5, 4.1, 25, 25.3.6, 7.4, 26.9.3, 28.6.23.

<sup>127</sup> This chapter also deals with Ammianus’ interest in loss of self-control and anger. Seager previously (33) stated, “Both pride and anger often lead to excess and are consequently condemned.”

<sup>128</sup> For Ammianus’ values, see Camus (1967); Blockley (1975); Brandt (1999).

<sup>129</sup> All translations of Brandt are by B. Sidwell.

hardly bear that the torments he inflicted should be terminated by death” (29.2.17);<sup>130</sup> and Gallus was criticized because of the frenzy of his disturbed mind, *turbidum saeviebat ingenium* (14.7.21). Thus, states Brandt, “It can be noted...that the *cupiditas saevienti*, the inclination towards cruel behaviour, at least in the legal context, is equivalent to the disposition for acting cruelly” (165). Furthermore, Brandt acknowledged that anger can be a positive force, for example, “*ira* in battle is a very useful emotion, it...awakens the combat courage and stimulates the soldiers to *virtus* (167). And Brandt also recognised that, “It is noticeable that Ammianus, besides the choleric Valentinian, also portrays his favourite-hero Julian as especially explosive.”<sup>131</sup> Although Brandt’s discussion of anger in Ammianus was comprehensive, it remains still a short overview of the most obvious themes, and his conclusions, whilst relevant, do not go to the lengths of in-depth study that this book is able to accomplish.

T.E.J. Wiedemann, in his chapter “Between men and beasts: barbarians in Ammianus Marcellinus” (1986), discussed the digressions of Ammianus in regards to barbarian behaviour and how this fit into previous historical models. Wiedemann picked out relevant descriptions of the barbarians in order to show how they fit into the stereotypical model; for example the Isaurians were brave because they were mad, *rabie saeviore amplificatis viribus* (14.2.14). The Alamanni too were possessed by savagery, *saevientes ultra solitum* (16.11.3). At the Battle of Strasbourg Julian spoke of the Alamanni’s, *rabies et immodicus furor* (16.12.31). Ammianus describes them as, *barbara feritate* (16.12.2), *frendentes immania, ultra solitum saevientium comae fluentes horrebant, et elucebat quidam ex oculis furor* (16.12.36); *violentia iraque incompressi (...) in modum exarsere flammaram* (16.12.44); and they attacked, *velut quodam furoris afflatu* (16.12.46). Wiedemann listed the barbarian groups that exhibited rage and pointed out that Ammianus considered them to be, *gentes saevissimae* (26.4.5) and that through their savagery they endangered the empire. For Ammianus the enemies of Rome were,

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<sup>130</sup> *ita saeviret infeste, ut poenarum maiores aegre ferret finiri cum morte dolores.*

<sup>131</sup> Valentinian: 27.7.4; 27.7.7; 28.1.23; 28.2.9; 29.3.2; 30.5.10; 30.6.3; 30.8.12. Julian: 16.4.2; 16.12.3; 22.13.2; 22.14.2; 23.2.4; 24.3.2; 24.5.6; 24.5.7; 24.5.10.

“undomesticated (*ferae*), violent, insolent, or mad when, and in so far as, they attack the Roman empire” (195). Wiedemann also made mention that the Persian king Sapor was individually enraged and that he shared this anger with some Roman emperors (17.5.15; 20.6.1; 27.12.11; 20.7.3–11). Most importantly for this book is that Wiedemann showed that Ammianus did not apply anger terms to barbarians and others frequently, and that it was unsystematic. Thus, “*Furor* or *ira* are qualities of people Ammianus does not like, whether they are Romans or not: they are not national characteristics” (196). Further on Wiedemann stated that Roman soldiers did not hesitate to butcher the enemy under the influence of *ira*, and demonstrated that, “Ammianus does not intend his readers to understand his ascription of savagery and duplicity to the enemies of Rome as in any sense ethnographic. He is well aware that Roman armies behave no differently” (196).

Another fascinating theme Wiedemann picked up was the wild beast metaphors in Ammianus. This was usually in relation to some form of ferocity that the historian wished to point out. For example, in 359 at the siege of Amida, Ammianus indicated that some of the Gallic soldiers threatened their tribunes for not allowing them to sally forth against the Persians, *utque dentatae in caveis bestiae taetro paedore acerbius efferatae evadendi spe repagulis versabilibus inliduntur* (19.6.4). Even an individual could be described as a wild beast in the amphitheatre; for example Maximinus, as prefect of Rome, *effudit genuinam ferociam pectori crudo adfixam, ut saepe faciunt amphitheatrales ferae, diffractis tandem solutae posticis* (28.1.10). Summing up, Wiedemann concluded that Ammianus was writing in a literary genre, and many of his digressions about marginal groups were expected by his audience as they were written in the classical tradition. Therefore Wiedemann’s value is his unearthing of centuries-old stereotypes, but he does not go as far in examining the purpose behind the anger representations that this book covers.

## CHAPTER SUMMARIES

Chapter 1, “Anger and the Military in the *Res Gestae*,” will address episodes and issues that specifically involved the Roman military within the Empire and without. The discussion includes concepts that are specific to the emotions within military circles, both elite and non-elite. From it will come an investigation that reveals the importance anger had within a collective, how the soldiers could as



a corps use anger to influence the actions of their superiors, and also how they were able to harness their anger in order to overcome fear and thus face the enemy valiantly as a coordinated fighting unit.

Chapter 2, “Anger, and Persians and Barbarians,” focuses on the enemies of the Roman Empire. Ammianus does not refrain from including the emotions of these groups, but instead of frequently supporting their anger as he does with the Roman military, the anger of the barbarians was associated with madness and frenzy, and held none of the positive value terms which he reserved for Roman citizens. The anger of the Persians on the other hand was supposedly due to their untrustworthiness and duplicity. This chapter is divided into two sections, the first and most comprehensive deals with ‘barbarians,’ that is those groups from outside the western and eastern halves of the Empire who constantly had to be subjected quite severely to Roman might. The second section deals with the Persians and especially the Great King Sapor who were not *barbari* like the Alamanni, Huns or Goths.

Chapter 3, “Anger, and Emperors and Caesars,” focuses on the imperial rulers of the Empire, and how their anger could impact greatly on everyone living within their sphere of influence. Unlimited power could make the emperors paranoid and suspicious. Since their emotions were not always under control they could lash out at individuals and groups who may not have caused any real offence. A good emperor used moderation in ruling and warfare. A bad or inexperienced emperor was governed by emotion rather than reason.

Chapter 4, “Anger and the Urban Populace,” addresses the issue of anger felt by communities living within the Roman Empire. These include populations residing within Rome itself, as well as those living in other urban centres, such as Antioch in Syria and Alexandria in Egypt, an enormous group of lower class citizens whom Ammianus, in general, does not have much sympathy for. To him they were uncultured, lacked sophistication and the values that he held so dear. It is interesting therefore that Ammianus did record incidents of anger on the part of the common people when they combined to vent their anger, and his language was not always

derogatory, but at times even showed consideration for their grievances, often caused by corrupt or incompetent officials.

Chapter 5, “Magnates and Anger,” discusses several instances of anger involving *honestiores*. Magnates and officials often sought to conceal their emotions, because they were especially at risk of revealing certain vulnerabilities. Magnates at a bureaucratic level were closer to the *populus* than were the emperors, therefore threats from the people directly endangered them, and any sign of weakness was quickly exploited by political opponents. However, it will also be shown that magnates could and did display anger in order to coerce and control those around and beneath them, in order to satisfy the demands of the emperors who ruled over them all.

Part of the scholarly debate over the purpose of Ammianus’ work involves its relationship to the *Annals* and *Histories* of Tacitus, which covered the years AD 14–96.<sup>132</sup> Chapter 6, “Tacitus and Ammianus on Anger,” compares and contrasts the instances of anger in both historians through analysing their anger portrayals as well as their uses of many of the same keywords, although there are certain anger terms unique to only one particular work. The comparison reveals continuity as well as change in their use of anger keywords. Both authors have the emperors as central to their narratives. Warfare in both the first and fourth centuries was a constant. The similarities and differences in the use of anger terms are worth discussing. *Ira* clearly conveyed rage but other terms were more ambiguous and depended upon the context as well as

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<sup>132</sup> For the lost books of the *Histories* see, for example, Barnes (1977) 224–231, “Of the original twelve books of Tacitus’ *Histories*, only the first four and part of the fifth have survived” (224). When it comes to the *Annals*, Books 7–10 and some of Book 11 are lost; Book 16 breaks off midway through, Woodman (2004) ix. For Ammianus writing a continuation of Tacitus, see, e.g., Rolfe (1939) xv, “Ammianus set himself the vast project of succeeding Tacitus as an historian, and might have entitled his work, ‘Res Gestae a fine Corneli Taciti.’” Thompson (1947) 17 supports this view, stating, “there can be no doubt that his intention was to continue the *Annals* and *Histories* of Tacitus.” Cf. Thompson (1942) 130; Laistner (1971) 146; Syme (1968a) 216. Contra: Wilshire (1973) 221–227; Sabbah (1978) 101–111; Matthews (1989) 482–483 n.45; Marincola (1997) 254.

the social stratum. Some key words in Tacitus and Ammianus were used exclusively for Romans and others for outsiders.

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This book uses the Teubner text of W. Seyfarth (1999<sup>2</sup>) and where necessary, the English translation of W. Hamilton (1986).<sup>133</sup> Seyfarth is the standard text quoted by scholars of Ammianus, such as Hamilton (1986) (though other texts were also incorporated) and Barnes (1998). The lexicon by M. Chiabo (1983) provides easy access to the key words designating anger. The specialised commentaries begun by De Jonge (1948–1982), and carried on by the Dutch scholars J. Den Boeft, *et al.* (1987–ongoing), contribute by providing many useful references to related works, as well as detailed explanations of many of Ammianus' phrases. In regards to the translation by Hamilton, it has been said that his version is “accurate but sometimes bloodless”;<sup>134</sup> however, the translations by Rolfe contain a worrying amount of “false renderings”;<sup>135</sup> and thus where Hamilton is unavailable the translations shall be my own.

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<sup>133</sup> Where Hamilton is not available, the translator will be cited. Translations for other sources are listed in the bibliography.

<sup>134</sup> Kelly (2008) 9.

<sup>135</sup> Fletcher (1939) 193–195.

# 1. ANGER AND THE MILITARY IN THE *RES GESTAE*

How much in Ammianus shall be put down to the manner,  
how much to the lessons of life?

Ronald Syme<sup>1</sup>

## INTRODUCTION

Ammianus Marcellinus, unlike his literary predecessors Tacitus and Livy,<sup>2</sup> travelled a great deal in his service to the Roman army; serving for at least fifteen years.<sup>3</sup> The acquaintance Ammianus had with the greater part of the empire added to the historian's knowledge base. The only important regions he did not traverse were Britain, Spain and Africa west of Egypt.<sup>4</sup> This amount of personal experience enlarged his work as an authority on the behaviour of the Roman military, as it did not always depend on imagination or fragmentary details.

Commentators concur on only one point, that the last six books of the *Res Gestae*, covering the years 364 to 378, recount

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<sup>1</sup> Syme (1968a) 216.

<sup>2</sup> We do not know for certain how much military experience Tacitus had.

<sup>3</sup> Thompson (1942) 130ff. Paschoud (1989) 40. According to the *Codex Theodosianus*, in a decree of 325 (7.20.4), the length of service was on average a period of twenty-four years.

<sup>4</sup> Momigliano (1977) 135. However, as Hummer (1998) 8 pointed out, Ammianus' interest in military and political matters were his primary concern, rather than ethnographic.

events so recent that Ammianus must have procured his information from such primary sources as official records, eyewitness reports,<sup>5</sup> and personal observation.<sup>6</sup>

Ammianus was, at times, a participant within his narrative. One of the most memorable of these occasions was recorded at 19.2, where as a soldier in the fortified city of Amida, he was forced to make a daring escape from the Persian forces, led by their Great King Sapor. After this conflict, Ammianus saw action, so far as can be proved, only in Julian's Persian expedition, for which he drew some information from Eunapius' history. That he needed a literary account for his description seems puzzling. There is the suggestion that he served in a technical post without access to the inner circles of command, and this may explain his inability to write solely from personal observation about high-level planning and the general activities of the army during these operations. Therefore, although an eyewitness to some occurrences after 363, he did not demonstrably rely upon his own experiences extensively.<sup>7</sup> This may reveal why, even though he spent many years as a soldier, Ammianus' knowledge of military matters was limited, especially in regards to the machines of war (23.4). Nevertheless, Ammianus was obviously no armchair historian.

Furthermore, one must not be carried away by the notion that just because Ammianus was a witness and participant that all he said is truth. For as one author has stated, "the more detailed information that Ammianus has as an eyewitness does not lead to an account more precise and worthier of confidence, but quite on the contrary to a more brilliant literary working."<sup>8</sup> All the same, Ammianus, like Tacitus, was writing a literary work, not a textbook of military history. Thus, as with his predecessors, there was

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<sup>5</sup> Cf. Tomlin (1972) 254.

<sup>6</sup> Crump (1975) 23. For this original viewpoint see Seeck (1849). See also Thompson (1969) 20ff. for a comprehensive study on the primary sources. For a detailed listing of the 19<sup>th</sup> century German scholarship on the subject of sources for Ammianus, see Barnes (1998) and the bibliography of Matthews (1989).

<sup>7</sup> Crump (1975) 28. For Ammianus as an eyewitness, cf. Blockley (1988) 245; Drijvers (1998).

<sup>8</sup> Paschoud (1989) 54.

conjecture and even rumours throughout his historical writings. Of this point, Thompson stated, “those who accuse Ammianus of vagueness in military matters are merely saying that he lived too soon.”<sup>9</sup>

Ammianus’ status as a *protector domesticus*<sup>10</sup> accorded him certain privileges, such as occasionally being present during the intelligence and planning work for military operations.<sup>11</sup> The military in the fourth century gave high-ranking officers a level of prestige that was in nature similar to, yet removed from, the senatorial elite.<sup>12</sup> Being a *protector* meant that he subsequently held an elite perspective in regards to the behaviour of the common soldiery.<sup>13</sup> As with Tacitus, his history was clearly meant for the upper classes, for it was not designed to deal with “the reasons why common soldiers were punished before the standards” (26.1.1).<sup>14</sup> Ammianus

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<sup>9</sup> Thompson (1969) 125. Crump (1975) 28 drew attention to the difficulties that record keeping presented to the late Roman historian. Sabbah (2003) 52 supported the view that Ammianus was able to keep records, documents, maps, etc. to incorporate into his history. See especially Austin (1979) for a detailed account of Ammianus’ military knowledge; cf. Momigliano (1977) 136.

<sup>10</sup> For the officers known as the *protectores domestici*, their tasks and background stemming from both the imperial office-holding aristocracy and local aristocracies, see Jones (1964) 636–640; Frank (1969) 81ff.; Austin & Rankow (1995) 225f. For the definition of ‘elites’ in the Roman Empire, including Ammianus’ own status, see Matthews (2000) 429–446. Matthews (444) presented in this article the convincing conclusion that Ammianus was not from Alexandria, or some city other than Antioch, where his family had settled as part of the imperial service. This explained then how he came to serve so young as part of the ‘elite’ *protectores domestici*.

<sup>11</sup> Austin (1979) 162; (1983) 54 Cf. Chalmers (1960) 152–160; Barnes (1990) 62.

<sup>12</sup> Thus Ammianus and his fellow officers could enjoy a standing they would not necessarily have received in the civilian field. It is assumed that Ammianus was from the class of the *curiales*, or at least a supporter on the scale of Libanius, Cameron (1964) 19. For the antagonism between military and civilian elites in this period, see Frank (1967) 309–318.

<sup>13</sup> Cf. Matthews (1983) 31.

<sup>14</sup> Cf. Camus (1967) 24. See also Drijvers (1996) 536. Antioch in Syria, where Ammianus spent a considerable period of time, was divided greatly

wrote to present his personal viewpoint, and also intended to impress the educated upper classes with his report on all the important events that occurred during the time period he specified. His account reveals that this is certainly the case, for it excited the senses and drew the reader in, without dwelling on seemingly insignificant details.

Nevertheless, Ammianus appeared drawn to the common soldiery and could not help but present a reasonably fair picture of them, often excluding them from making bad decisions (although they often willingly followed them). For, “as a retired officer, he may have respected their *esprit de corps*.”<sup>15</sup> This attitude was very much unlike that of authors such as Livy, Dionysus of Halicarnassus or Diodorus Siculus, for those authors related, “the prejudiced accounts of patrician annalists.” Messer claimed that they could not escape the bias of their own upbringing against the commonality of the soldiers, whose supposed lack of morality easily led them to insubordination and mutinous behaviour.<sup>16</sup> This is an attitude that Ammianus largely did not share.

That is not to say that courting the favour of military men appealed to Ammianus. Indeed, he felt repulsed by the very idea, for his view was that the soldiers should be kept in their place. Ammianus, even though he admitted to being a *miles*, distanced himself from those brought up through the ranks and who originated from common descent. This mindset thus led him at 21.16.1 to write of the good qualities of Constantius’ reign:

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by class. The elites were educated in Greek — the language of culture — and thus Ammianus himself describes himself as a Greek, and in his *Res Gestae* used Greek words on a number of occasions. However, the common tongue was Aramaic and the city was likely to have had a large population who spoke exclusively Aramaic; it is easy therefore to see why the Greek-educated Ammianus held himself in such a high regard, vis-à-vis the common man.

<sup>15</sup> Tomlin (1972) 255.

<sup>16</sup> Messer (1920) 163. A comparison could be drawn between Ammianus and Velleius Paterculus, for Velleius was also a soldier and writer, however his narrative of the *Bellum Batonianum* (AD 6–9), in which he participated, was a personal and ideological narrative. For Velleius as a writer, see for example Sumner (1970) 257–297.

Under him, no general was advanced to the highest rank of nobility; as far as my memory serves, generals were only of the second grade. A master of cavalry was never given an official reception by the governor of his province, and was not allowed any share in civil administration. All officials, both civil and military, looked up to the praetorian prefect with traditional respect as the holder of the highest of all offices.

Ammianus saw himself as separate from the common soldiery, as he did from the common people (as will be discussed in Chapter 4). This was perhaps a reaction to upward social movement, such as was exhibited in the rise to power of the emperors Valens and Valentinian. To the mind of an elitist, men who deserved the highest offices were those who came from privileged upbringings, not those who were uncultured and uncultivated, without the classical background that encouraged proper leadership qualities. His prejudices aside, Ammianus still regarded the army as an institution quite positively, as is shown in the emphasis and quality he devoted to passages dealing with all aspects of military encounters.

The importance Ammianus placed on the military was expressed through his descriptions of battles, which were his most “stylised passages.”<sup>17</sup> Ammianus certainly saw military expertise as one of the key virtues in his narrative, and those emperors who lacked it were especially to be disdained.<sup>18</sup> Ammianus did not narrate the insignificant causes of anger in the common soldiers, but there are key reasons and motivations for signifying anger in the main body of the soldiery, these include action readiness against an enemy, frustration caused by lack of supplies, poor leadership and so on. The purpose of these portrayals were, of course, for posterity, as in some instances it helped to show the extent to which an individual leader and his decisions were either supported, or opposed, by a significant body of people who had more influence over political decisions than many were prepared to admit.<sup>19</sup> The need to have military backing was essential for the survival of any emperor in this century. Once that was lost and

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<sup>17</sup> Sabbah (2003) 60.

<sup>18</sup> Matthews (1989) 283.

<sup>19</sup> Cf. Downey (1969) 26.



replaced by disrespect and insult, disaster often followed. For example, the Emperor Gratian was executed by his own mutinous troops in 383;<sup>20</sup> Julian, Valentinian, Procopius and Gratian were all acclaimed as Augusti by their soldiers.<sup>21</sup> The master of infantry in Gaul, Silvanus, attempted usurpation in 355, but was murdered by his troops (15.5).<sup>22</sup> Both usurpers Magnentius and Procopius were, in the end, abandoned by their soldiers.<sup>23</sup>

**Table 1.1 Summary of anger words per book of the *Res Gestae***

Book	Number of Anger Words
14	21
15	2
16	15
17	7
18	1
19	17
20	11
21	1
22	9
23	0
24	12
25	11
26	5
27	10
28	14
29	9
30	4
31	7
<b>Total</b>	<b>156</b>

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<sup>20</sup> When Magnus Maximus was proclaimed in Britain. See Cameron (1993) 135; cf. Hedrick (2000) 41.

<sup>21</sup> Brown (1970) 237.

<sup>22</sup> For Silvanus see *CAH*<sup>2</sup> 13, 27.

<sup>23</sup> Mudd (1984) 103; Matthews (1989) 283. For Magnentius, see Burns (1994) 3f.

**Table 1.2 Summary of anger words that deal specifically with the Roman military**

Book	Number of Anger Words
14	6
15	0
16	4
17	5
18	0
19	4
20	3
21	1
22	1
23	0
24	5
25	7
26	2
27	2
28	1
29	0
30	0
31	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>41</b>

As Table 1.1 reveals, in the *Res Gestae* there are over one hundred and fifty instances of words that denote anger, such as *ira* and *indignatio*, and this equates to, on average, 8.7 anger words for each of the eighteen extant books. This only takes into account the words referring to specific characters or groups of people who were feeling or expressing (actual) anger, rather than general phenomena or vague/unclear references. It is beyond the scope of this book to explore every instance of anger that Ammianus indicated beyond the keywords, as this required too much risky inference, these then are excluded.

Using the same criteria as anger, there are in total 374 definitive instances of fear in the *Res Gestae*. After fear, anger was one of the leading emotions that infused the *Res Gestae* of Ammianus Marcellinus. This is obvious from the very beginning of his extant work. For example, Book 14 has the highest percentage

of the total anger words at 13 per cent, that is, out of a total of 156 anger words. From Book 14, words that deal with the anger of the military make up 28.57 per cent, i.e. 6 out of 21. There are numerous portrayals of military activity recorded by Ammianus in this book, activity that naturally evoked an emotional reaction. These episodes deal with the inroads of the barbaric tribes of the Isaurians, the soldiers' anger at the prefect Domitianus and their lack of supplies and delay at Châlon sur Saône (Cabyllona). In total, anger amongst the military makes up 26.28 per cent of the anger words that are looked at in this pool of data. This is a significant percentage, and demonstrates that Ammianus was concerned with the role that anger had to play in the armed forces.

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When the number of instances of anger in the military is compared with each specific book of the *Res Gestae*, it is fascinating to see how the break-up is influenced by specific circumstances, such as battles and attempted mutinies. When we apply the number of anger instances per book in a comparative analysis we can explore the causes and, in many cases, the effects, which are contained in each reference to military anger. Examples in Book 14 set the reader up for the themes of *ira militum* that permeate the rest of the books. The two major themes that are immediately apparent are: the anger of the soldiers towards a perceived or acknowledged enemy and the anger towards, or on behalf of, a leader. These themes are generally separated and treated as distinct events, although they do conceivably have effects upon each other to a certain extent. It must be noted that anger exhibited towards an enemy did not necessarily imply action, for it is conceivable that they would fight anyway; also, alternatively, anger towards a leader could lead to rioting. The notion that anger was a significant motivator for military activity is not a new one, however, the extent to which it permeated the pages of the *Res Gestae*, and the important perception that Ammianus held of it, has not been studied so comprehensively before. This chapter then will deal with the two significant themes stated above, whether there is any interrelationship between them and what the key causes and effects of anger in the military are.

*Anger and military activity*

<p>The Brigands of Isauria 14.2, the Battle of Strasbourg 16.12,<sup>24</sup> Julian and the Alamanni 17.10, Constantius and the Limigantes 17.13, the Siege of Amida 19.5,<sup>25</sup> Constantius and the Limigantes 19.11, Demands of Julian 20.8, Constantius and Julian 21.13, Julian and the Surena 24.3, Julian and Pirisabora 24.2, Sack of Maozamalcha 24.4, Persian Attack 25.1, Death of Julian 25.3, Jovian and Sapor 25.7, Valentinian and the Alamanni 27.10, Flaccianus 28.6.</p>
<p>Total 16 Episodes<sup>26</sup></p>

**THE CAUSES OF ANGER IN THE ROMAN MILITARY**

**Summary of the Causes of Anger in the Roman Military**

CAUSE OF ANGER	REFERENCE
Impatience	14.10.3, 14.10.5
Perceived unjust conditions and outrage	16.11.12, 17.1.9, 17.10.6, 19.5.8, 20.4.16, 20.8.8, 22.3.8, 25.3.10, 25.7.4, 28.6.23
Threats or frustration as a result of the presence of, or the action of, the barbarian enemy — or the resistance of the enemy, esp. in sieges	26.9.3
United anger at entering, or being engaged in, a battle or a siege — or an attack by the enemy	14.2.17, 16.12.10, 16.12.13, 16.12.52, 17.13.9, 17.13.15, 19.5.3, 19.11.14, 21.13.16, 24.2.5, 24.4.1, 24.4.20, 24.4.25, 25.1.2, 25.3.6, 27.10.5, 27.10.7
TOTAL 30	

As the table above demonstrates, there were several reasons for the Roman soldiers to show their anger, and this led almost always to

<sup>24</sup> See especially Blockley (1977) 218–231.

<sup>25</sup> For an analysis of battles and sieges in Ammianus, see Naudé (1958) 92–105.

<sup>26</sup> This table reveals the military episodes where anger was specified by Ammianus. Naturally anger words can be used several times in one episode.

significant consequences for themselves or others. Anger in individuals occurs for a variety of reasons that are often personal, but for anger to be exhibited collectively, the cause must be something so significant that it is shared by all. Ammianus does not denigrate the Roman soldiers for exhibiting anger, for, “in the case of anger, which in a military context, when the reactions of individuals merge or are submerged in a collective wave of emotion, is often regarded as acceptable, if not actually praised.”<sup>27</sup> As a former soldier, Ammianus understood and often supported the collective reactions of the Romans, as they came as a unified response to an active threat, the behaviour of a leader, injustice felt at a lack of pay or supplies, or other unjust conditions. Roman soldiers were viewed by the historian as far superior to the unsophisticated and uncultured barbarians, even though they were not always the best behaved, but for the most part they were following the traditional roles of military *virtus* (including *ferocia*) and were thus to be praised.

### **Lack of Supplies as a Cause of Anger**

As stated above, anger often occurred when the military deemed that they were not being treated fairly, or were lacking in essential supplies. In 354, Ammianus reported that Constantius had assembled his army in order to attack the Alamanni. However, when they were delayed at Châlon without the necessities of life (14.10.3ff.), their frustration at their situation led them to become vehemently angry (*miles...saeviebat*)<sup>28</sup> and to threaten the life of Rufinus,<sup>29</sup> the praetorian prefect,<sup>30</sup> when he tried to explain to them why the convoy of provisions was interrupted. Spring rains and the swelling of rivers had held up the transport of supplies

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<sup>27</sup> Seager (1986) 133.

<sup>28</sup> Ammianus referred to the anger of the soldiers twice in this book using the terms *saeviebat* and *irritator*. Cf. Gell. *praef.* 20. Cf. 14.10.4; 20.8.8.

<sup>29</sup> Vulcacius Rufinus was the maternal uncle of Caesar Gallus. Cf. Jones (1964) 134, 141; also Edbrooke (1976) 49.

<sup>30</sup> Cf. Austin & Rankow (1995) 227f.

from Aquitania.<sup>31</sup> Their rage was only abated once funds were distributed and supplies were finally found.

Ammianus made a similar observation at 25.7.4, when he discussed the unfortunate reign of Jovian, whose soldiers were on the brink of starvation in Persia. The anger of the soldiers (*furebat...miles*) at the misery of their situation forced Jovian into making a shameful treaty with the Persian king Sapor. Collective anger, when exhibited for reasons of the utmost necessity, was an inevitable response in the military to bad leadership, or what seemed unreasonable or avoidable hardship. The causes of anger here fit in with factors of anger, number 1, 2, 4 on page 16 of the Introduction. For the soldiers, “(1) desired to blame individuals; (2) they overlooked mitigating details before attributing blame and (4) they discounted the role of uncontrollable factors when attributing causality.”

What these episodes also represent are frustration, wherein, frustration is defined as, “A barrier keeping people from reaching an attractive goal they had expected to obtain can lead to open aggression.”<sup>32</sup> Although in these cases there was an outcome that was the result of a show of aggression provoked by anger.

### Enemy Encounters

Apart from being used to satisfy demands or to demand satisfaction, anger was also an instigator to perform well, as part of a legion or military detachment. Ammianus was very aware of this importance, therefore we almost always have a reference to the anger of the soldiers once a battle, or some type of engagement, was about to be joined, or when groups of the enemy hindered the progress of the Roman army.<sup>33</sup> The importance of this collective emotionality of the soldiers, along with their enforced discipline, meant that an enemy could be overcome and routed, even when the odds seemed stacked against them. There are central passages in the *Res Gestae* which recalled the two significant themes that permeated the descriptions of the causes of anger in the Roman military, namely, the angry reaction of the soldiers towards

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<sup>31</sup> In 358 Julian was similarly delayed at Paris whilst waiting for supplies from Aquitania, Jones (1964) 627.

<sup>32</sup> Berkowitz (1989) 71.

<sup>33</sup> Cf. Veg. *ERM* 3.12.6.

barbarian threats and the anger of the soldiers towards perceived injustices. Examples of the first theme are readily present within Book 17, for in 357, German groups infuriated the Roman military by causing delays to the progress of the Roman soldiers. This belligerent attitude of the Germans then naturally led to open armed conflicts, which, in turn, aroused and incited the Romans to further rage.

From Ammianus' portrayals, it soon becomes apparent that the fury of the Roman soldiers was due to entering, or being engaged in, battle with an enemy, or else through being delayed in the performance of their duties. In every instance the soldiers were unified in their anger, and their reactions formed into hostility. In passages 17.1.9, 17.10.6 the soldiers' enmity came as a response to the need to take revenge on those who had caused them a deliberate harm. This is in line with modern research, for animal behaviourists have posited that anger stimulates offensive aggression, whereas fear encourages defensive aggression.<sup>34</sup> This perception of an injustice was in accordance with Aristotle's viewpoint that the distress which belongs to anger is caused by the thought of being belittled and the pleasure which accompanies anger is caused by the thought of revenge, which is an attempt to restore one's value.<sup>35</sup> Thus at 17.1.9 when the Roman soldiers were scarcely able to contain their anger (*vix indignationem capientibus animis*) when their enemy had felled trees to block their path, and they were forced to make a long detour, suggests their belief in a transgression to their notions of justice. This therefore relates to our determinant of anger number 3, "a response to righteous indignation." Their leader, in this case Julian, would have aided in instigating this emotional response, for it ensured that they would focus their collective rage into aggression directed externally, rather than taking their frustrations out on one another.

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<sup>34</sup> Blanchard & Blanchard (1984) 1–62; cf. Harmon-Jones & Sigelman (2001) 797–803.

<sup>35</sup> For example in *Rhetoric* 2.2, 1379b7–13. In 2.3, 1380a24–6, Aristotle remarks that our anger ceases towards those who humble themselves before us; even dogs do not bite those who sit down. Cf. Knuuttila (2004) 39.

At 17.13.9 and 17.13.15 Ammianus described scenes which were typical of *ira militum* in relation to battle-rage, a theme recurrent in Ammianus' descriptions of conflicts that involved the Roman military. The soldiers were reacting in the way that they were trained and thus any anger felt was justified, for it was the result of military *virtus*. For example, when Ammianus was describing the Roman defeat over the Sarmatians (17.13.15), it was, *ira virtusque deleuit*. Strong anger words such as *ira* indicated the wrath felt by individuals and groups, and in situations involving war *ira* could indicate violence and rage.<sup>36</sup> This scene then strongly reinforced the notion of the intensity of the anger felt by the soldiers against their enemies. In this sense *ira* was anger with a deliberate and purposeful undertone, which was not simply the fury of the animal or the savage, but the justified rage of those who were defending the honour of the Roman Empire. This therefore relates to Aristotle's viewpoint on anger:

Any society based on honour requires each individual to be militant and alert to violations of his own self-worth, and it is anger that manifests both to himself and, outwardly, to others, the fact that an unacceptable injury to self-regard has taken place.<sup>37</sup>

In these episodes, we are given the sense that the anger the soldiers felt was for a real and genuine reason and that anger was the appropriate response as befitted the situation. For example, an object was deliberately put in the way of the marching army; this not only hampered their progress, it forced them to take an alternate route — no doubt because they had to escort the siege equipment that could only be transported on sealed roads. This ploy was related twice in separate incidents in book 17. It was natural that the soldiers would take revenge on those who frustrated the fulfilment of their duty and this can be interpreted as righteous indignation. In fact this “righteous indignation” was also supported by Aristotle, who believed that we should feel anger for a slight (*Eth. Nic.* 4.5.1125b30–35). The purpose of the Germans was to prevent, or at least delay, the Roman soldiers from infiltrating their territory. However, the attempts by the barbarians

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<sup>36</sup> *CLD* 281.

<sup>37</sup> Fisher (2002) 176.



to protect themselves had a negative effect, for it caused the Roman soldiers to respond violently. Revenge for hampering their progress was expressed by the soldiers as their usual course of hostility. Ammianus' language demonstrated that he found the soldiers' actions here permissible, as he saw that they were consciously trying to rectify a wrong.

In one such punitive expedition against the Sarmatians in 358 (17.13), Ammianus described the ruthlessness of the soldiers towards their frightened enemy, many of whom tried to escape by swimming across a river. In this incident, the anger of the troops was a response to threats and insults made against the emperor Constantius. The soldiers' reaction was to protect and fight for the honour of their leader. Here a just cause is presented for the emotional response of the soldiers, i.e. anger on behalf of the Augustus, leading to bitter consequences for the enemy. This fits in with determinants of anger, numbers 3 and 6, i.e. "righteous indignation" and "a learnt response to certain situations."

What these passages from book 17 present is *ira militum* and righteous indignation. As soldiers, the response to threats to their notions of justice and duty was a physical display of violence. This ability to respond to difficult situations with action-readiness frequently meant successful outcomes for the well-disciplined troops. At 17.1.9 Ammianus described the soldiers who marched with the greatest confidence (*fidetissime*), then, after felled trees stopped their progress, they were cautious (*cautius*) in their retreat, even while their minds reeled with indignation (*indignationem*). However, in other episodes we do not get this sequence of emotions and the soldiers simply felt *ira* towards their acknowledged enemy at all stages. In essence, *ira* has replaced fear. The less fear that the soldiers felt, the more their confidence was raised, which in turn raised their ability to react in a more focussed manner to extreme circumstances — although it is well known that when fear is replaced by anger, then anger can cloud judgement. However, this does not seem to be the case in Book 17 where the soldiers continued to follow orders, although it should be pointed out that 'following orders' was not necessarily a sign of good judgement.

As stated above, Ammianus included in his history several instances of battle rage that prompted the soldiers into action,

often in the most trying of circumstances. *Ira* was quite often the specific term that the historian used to refer to the battle rage of the armed forces. *Ira militum* was an essential part of motivating the soldiers into action and when it was applied in such circumstances it was accepted and encouraged. The general Stoic rule and one that our historian often adhered to, was to judge anger as justified if it punished the aggressor.<sup>38</sup> We find this view in Ammianus (17.13.15) when he narrated that the Roman army “annihilated” the Sarmatians in 358 through the aid of wrath and valour, *ira et virtus*, after their savage attack upon the Romans. Ammianus used the term *indignatio* three times in reference to the soldiers and each time it referred to a specific injustice that they felt towards a particular infringement: *indignati* 16.11.12; *indignatio* 16.12.10; *indignatem* 17.1.19. Consequently, the righteousness of Julian was emphasised when the Caesar, through his *cobortatio*, persuaded his soldiers to fight the Alamanni with a just anger, *si...iustaque sustinet indignatio* (16.12.10).<sup>39</sup> Anger was linked with military virtue and righteousness when it was applied to certain situations, especially when it involved military activity against a barbarian enemy.

### Roman Military and Barbarians

Ammianus did distinguish between different words that meant anger, depending on the material which he was writing about. For example, when writing about the anger of the soldiers, he used powerful terms such as *ira* and *indignatio*. When he was referring to their enemies, in particular the barbarian groups of the Western Empire, he used terms such as *rabies* and *ferocia*,<sup>40</sup> words that relate to wildness, madness and frenzy.<sup>41</sup> This drew the readers’ minds to images of wild beasts, something that was more than merely a “stylistic affectation.”<sup>42</sup> For example, in a generalisation, Ammianus (27.7.4) described the emperor Valentinian as *homo propalam ferus*. As becomes apparent, *ferus* and *feritas* were generally used to qualify some barbaric peoples, with the only individuals referred to using

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<sup>38</sup> *SJF* 3.397. The desire to do damage to the aggressor was also part of Epicurean belief, Nussbaum (1994) 243.

<sup>39</sup> For more on the *cobortatio*, see Messer (1920) 174.

<sup>40</sup> E.g. 14.2.14; 14.10.14; 16.5.16.

<sup>41</sup> Cf. Wiedemann (1986) 189–201.

<sup>42</sup> Matthews (1989) 258.

these words were Valentinian, his brother Valens, and his Valentinian's henchman Maximinus.<sup>43</sup>

Ammianus incorporated *rabies* and *furor* in specific reference to the anger of individuals and groups a total of eleven times (this excludes generalisations), and none of these referred to the Roman military. The only time he used the verb *furo* to refer to the troops was when they were in a state of frenzy when excited by hunger, leading them to behave like barbarians (25.7.4). Ammianus held the image in his mind of the righteous Roman soldier in opposition to the fierce, raving savages who were rarely assigned any civilised virtues.<sup>44</sup> The homogeneity of the soldiers diminished any element of individuality, as he described the group as behaving as a single unit, with a singular consciousness. The collective behaviour of large groups meant that they could be manipulated by leaders on both sides by inducing an angry reaction that was either just and for the *virtus* and *gloria* of the Roman Empire,<sup>45</sup> or else was directed used for some ulterior purpose. The historian acknowledged the contrasting imagery he created in the minds of his Latin-speaking audience, who would also have associated these specific anger terms with their associated meanings.

Ammianus was thoroughly on the side of the common soldiers, for they, for the most part, were doing their duty, through obeying their orders and maintaining the glory of the Roman Empire. The soldiers that joined the Roman army were drawn from all parts of the empire, and were sometimes from the very barbarian groups against who they were in opposition. Nevertheless, the fact that they were integrated into the Roman military meant that they took on board the Roman values that the army encompassed and emphasised.<sup>46</sup> These soldiers, no matter their ethnic background, were accorded an overall level of praise from the historian. In contrast, those groups that were living outside the boundaries of civilisation were associated with the untrustworthiness of the wilderness. The Alamanni were described

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<sup>43</sup> Paschoud (1992) 77.

<sup>44</sup> Seager (1986) 68.

<sup>45</sup> "...*ira* in battle is a very useful emotion, it...awakens the combat courage and stimulates the soldiers to *virtus*," Brandt (1999) 167.

<sup>46</sup> Cf. Southern & Dixon (1996) 50; Potter (2004) 443.

as *barbara feritas*,<sup>47</sup> a very typical description of the fierce Germanic warriors throughout the *Res Gestae*. *Feritas* is a term that takes the barbarians into the realm of the savage, for they were not bound by the strong moral code that was emphasised by the Romans.

Thus for Ammianus, *ira* was connected with the soldiers when they were behaving as Roman soldiers should behave, with *virtus* and *bonos*, where *ira militum* helped make the Roman Empire secure. When *ira* was used to passionately support a leader, it was with either the supposed greater good in mind or, as in the case in Gaul in 360, the greater good of the soldiers involved (20.4.16), although the soldiers also felt a sense of betrayal and anxiety. For example, *ira* was used to express anger at a deserter at Amida in 359 (19.5.8).<sup>48</sup> *Ira militum* was also used consistently when speaking of the vengeance taken out upon the enemy (e.g. 24.2.5; 24.4.20).<sup>49</sup> And in Gaul, the soldiers showed *ira* in their support of Julian (20.4.16). However, various leaders could manipulate the wrath of the soldiers. This potentially had serious repercussions, not only for the soldiers themselves, but also for the instigator of their anger, no matter how secure he was in his position. The soldiers' anger was something to be seriously considered when one was in charge of a large group of relatively uneducated and armed individuals, who certainly had the potential to think for themselves.

## PRIMARY RESPONSES TO ANGER IN THE MILITARY

### Summary of Primary Responses

MANIFESTATION OF ANGER	REFERENCE
Gnashing and grinding of the teeth	16.12.13, 19.5.3, 27.10.7
The striking of spears against shields	14.2.17, 21.13.16, 25.3.10
Verbal abuse	28.6.23
Total 7	

<sup>47</sup> 16.12.2; 16.12.16; 16.12.23 & 16.12.31. Cf. Blockley (1977) 222.

<sup>48</sup> Cf. anger determinants numbers 2 & 4 in the Introduction.

<sup>49</sup> Cf. Val. Max. 2.9.9.

Primary manifestations of anger include the generalised exhibiting of battle rage. However, in the table given above (1.3), I have only included the direct observable physical reactions and have put 'battle rage' as a specific theme further down. For battle rage was both a manifestation as well as a secondary response to notions of outrage, or else was caused through being incited into an emotional state by a figure of power, or a collective group of individuals, such as was found in a legion. In fact, all of the references given in the table above are clear indications of battle rage. The soldiers incorporated physical displays of anger as a collective unit in order to demonstrate their anger towards a particular offending individual or group. Anger was used in a theatrical-like display, the effect of which was as familiar to the enemy as it was to the audience of drama.

When describing battle rage, Ammianus incorporated a good deal of sound and imagery in order to transmit the primary responses to the emotion of anger. The commanders of the army were supported through the collective rage of the soldiers, whose fearsome reactions were expressed through physical displays, such as clashing of spears against shields and the gnashing of teeth (a typical sign of anger, but only observable at close quarters by the enemy), although it is questionable whether they actually did this or it was a stereotype. In these episodes we can understand how strong leaders could manipulate the collective emotional output of the soldiers in order to deliberately support their military and even political, ambitions. In his descriptions, Ammianus does not judge the behaviour of the soldiers as immoderate, but as suited to the occasion. The soldiers behaved as they were encouraged to behave and as they were fighting for Roman military commanders, then, for the most part, it was for the right reasons — i.e. the security of the Roman Empire and the preservation of its *mores*.

The conditioning for the soldiers to unite through their anger was by exhibiting such overt behaviour as clashing spears against shields, so that this collective involvement made the army a powerfully unified force. The sound created, along with the visually noticeable fury of the soldiers, was meant to strike terror into the enemy. Therefore, creating a loud sound could also mean the provision of support of a particular leader, as well as being a means to intimidate their opponents. This primary response could, of

course, also be usefully employed in order to support a leader and to intimidate an enemy at one and the same time. In other words, confected anger.

At 21.13.16 Ammianus described the soldiers who brandished their spears angrily (*suam hastasque vibrantes irati*) when they were told of the usurper Julian who threatened their emperor. The soldiers' anger gave the emperor Constantius confidence and it turned his fear (*metus*) into joy (*laetitia*). Ammianus demonstrates this transformation of emotional state as one that needed the collective encouragement of the military, rather than Constantius simply ordering the soldiers to obey his commands. As such, the military was shown to hold a degree of political sway in either their support or refusal of the requests of their emperor. The notion that the emperor was in full control of his military forces was dependent upon his strength as a leader and the ability to understand the emotional state of the army. Both elements were essential factors for inciting his soldiers into action, and then remaining in control of them once their spirits were roused. In a passage of Aristotle's early logical writings, he illustrated a philosophical rule by stating that, "shame exists in the reasoning part, fear in the spirited part, distress in the appetitive part, for pleasure is also in this, and anger in the spirited part" (*Topics* 4.5, 126a8–10).<sup>50</sup> It is doubtful that Constantius was a deep philosopher, however he was aware of the importance of the army as a significant source of power and that their passions must be used to enable successful outcomes.<sup>51</sup>

The army as a collective force on occasion united against a leader and dictated actions, as happened at the Battle of Strasbourg when Julian wanted to wait to engage the enemy, but his men were eager to fight at once. The "principal reason was that, if they did not, the men would be impossible to control."<sup>52</sup> At 21.13.16, as in similar cases, it was the emotional reaction of the armed forces that prompted the emperor into action. For Ammianus wrote, *suam*

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<sup>50</sup> Knuuttila (2004) 26.

<sup>51</sup> As a consequence, he occasionally promoted barbarian military men over Roman aristocrats, and this resulted in his designation of Arbitio as *consul prior* in 355, Edbrooke (1976) 50. However, as Jones (1964) 135 pointed out, "such cases aroused comment and were presumably rare."

<sup>52</sup> Seager (1999) 589.

*bastisque vibrantes irati*, and with the noise and visual element involved this unity ensured that the soldiers remained a collective force that would pull together to attack another Roman force in the West. Constantius had precedent for his actions against Julian<sup>53</sup> and encouraged and supported the *ira* of his soldiers, and chose not to suppress it. Ammianus strongly supported the side of Julian against the Augustus — in particular his strong military presence in Gaul, for he contrasted this with the, “generally quietist policy of Constantius.”<sup>54</sup> When the Roman soldiers were acting under the orders of their commanding officers, they were behaving with *virtus* and in Ammianus’ portrayal, this was the proper behaviour for the Roman soldiery, no matter his agreement with the behaviour of their leaders.

The prompting of leaders by the soldiers into action was also shown above in passage 16.12.13. As with Constantius’ troops, Julian’s legions showed their support for their commander through a physical display of battle rage. On this occasion they showed their eagerness for battle as they gnashed and ground their teeth, as well as through the striking of their spears against their shields, *stridore dentium infrendentes, ardoremque pugnandi hastis illiando scuta monstrantes*. Here, anger was used to mask or displace feelings of helplessness, for, as with Constantius’ troops, Julian’s soldiers besought him to lead them out against the enemy. In this way the soldiers demonstrated their collective response to a known threat. Ammianus also recounted that their acclamations followed the speeches of their commanding officers and that they would invoke their deity to aid in their victories. This gave the process an added religious element.

Only once at 19.5.3 do we have a specific reference to anger in the Roman military using the keyword *frendo*. In total, Ammianus used this term seven times and one is ambiguous. Consequently only six make up this pool of data.<sup>55</sup> The other references to *frendo* were once in regards to the anger of Julian and the rest were in

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<sup>53</sup> For example, the wars of his father against Licinius (324) and Magnentius (353). Cf. for Licinius as portrayed in Eusebius, Montgomery (2000) 130–138, also *CAHP* 13, 12. For Magnentius, see *CAHP* 13, 10–11.

<sup>54</sup> Blockley (1977) 219.

<sup>55</sup> See Chapter 6, Table 6.1.

relation to Persians and barbarians. Tacitus did not use this term anywhere in his historical works, although Livy did.<sup>56</sup> *Frendo* is usually found in conjunction with *dentibus*, meaning to gnash or grind one's teeth.<sup>57</sup> This is a very obvious manifestation of anger.

Ammianus wrote of the two Magnentian legions which were trapped inside Amida that they snarled like wild beasts (*frendebant ut bestiae*). These recent arrivals from Gaul were itching to attack the Persians that were assaulting the walls of the fortified city. What makes this account even more pertinent to this discussion is that here Ammianus was an eyewitness, so his descriptions of them behaving like wild beasts (*bestiae*) is close to his own perceptions — although naturally these representations can be deliberately distorted to create effect. These were men who lived to fight and their battle rage made them a powerful, if somewhat undisciplined, force. Roman troops acquired from the provinces took on the qualities of their leaders; however Magnentius' men were still undergoing that transition to obeying the commands of their officers. Here it is made to appear that their so called natural "barbarism" shines through.

Modern psychologists however, would not agree that these anger traits were in any way indicative of "barbarism", but rather are a trait of all human beings. Anger can have outward, aggressive expressions, for example becoming loud and argumentative, as well as becoming verbally intimidating and assaultive. Other expressions include threatening to or actually striking out at other people and kicking, hitting, slamming, etc. objects rather than people.<sup>58</sup> Certainly, these anger expressions were exploited by leaders to encourage their soldiers to further action. By collectively expressing anger together through physical displays, the soldiers became an effective and powerful fighting unit.

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<sup>56</sup> Livy 30.20.1, (*Hannibal*) *frendens gemensque ac nix lacrimis temperans dicitur legatorum uerba audisse*.

<sup>57</sup> CLD 255.

<sup>58</sup> Deffenbacher, *et al.* (1996) 587.



## SECONDARY RESPONSES TO ANGER IN THE ROMAN MILITARY

### Summary of Secondary Responses<sup>59</sup>

SECONDARY RESPONSE	REFERENCE
Angry threats	14.10.3, 14.10.5, 20.8.8, 28.6.23
Destruction of property and civilians	17.10.6, 24.4.1, 27.10.7
The action of checking the progress of/or attacking the enemy	21.13.16, 25.1.2, 25.7.4
The killing of the enemy	16.12.52, 17.13.9, 17.13.15, 19.5.8, 19.11.14, 24.2.5, 24.4.20, 24.4.25, 25.3.10, 26.9.3, 27.10.5
<b>Total 21</b>	

### Julian's Proclamation in Paris

The passage below is taken from the letter that Julian wrote to Constantius, to justify what happened in Paris when the soldiers forcibly proclaimed him Augustus in February 360.<sup>60</sup> From this letter it is apparent that the anger of the soldiers was a result of their perception of an offence. According to Aristotle, "...anger is necessarily caused by the thought of outrage..."<sup>61</sup> Although this is not the only reason why people become angry. Outrage was a secondary response to anger when it was cognitively judged to be caused by an injustice.

At 20.8.8 the 'outrage' (*iracundiae*) of the soldiers resulted from not receiving their pay, as well as Constantius' orders that "Julian should send to the East four *auxilia palatina*, the Heruli and the Batavi, the Celtae and the Petulantes, 300 men from each of his

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<sup>59</sup> Some of these can also be seen as primary responses. There is often a fine line here.

<sup>60</sup> Ammianus presented the letter of Julian that he possibly had access to or knew of from personal contact with Julian's secretaries, although he does present *adlocutiones*, as does Tacitus, Blockley (1973) 73. Cf. Williams (1997) 62.

<sup>61</sup> Fortenbaugh (1975) 12.

other regiments, plus the pick of his two *scholae*, the Scutarii and Gentiles.”<sup>62</sup> It appears that these orders were the response of Constantius to his suspicions that Julian was becoming too popular in the West and he naturally wished to suppress a possible uprising. Naturally, this decree would of course cause angst amongst any group whose perceptions of the outside world were very limited and/or cherished their family life. Nevertheless, as has been pointed out, these field armies were fully mobile and they were theoretically able to travel from one corner of the empire to the next. However, as is the case here, these armies could form local attachments. Also, there were German units who had been guaranteed that they would not serve beyond the Alps upon their enlistment, for these were volunteers, not defeated opponents.<sup>63</sup>

The letter of Julian explained that due to the anger of the soldiers he was forced to retreat in fear. He then admitted that he was only able to console the troops and calm their outrage through his persuasive words. However, they could only be fully assuaged when he yielded to their demand to make him emperor. Julian accepted this finally in order to quieten their armed violence (*vim armatam*) (20.8.10). The indications introduced by the historian support the notion that Julian became emperor through the outrage and forced responses of his soldiers. This letter nevertheless failed to appease Constantius, even though it offered a number of concessions. Julian marched east towards Constantinople in 361, but Constantius died in Cilicia on 3 November 361, before he could engage the usurper.<sup>64</sup>

One more instance in this sequence of events that demonstrates secondary responses to anger occurred shortly after Julian’s forced usurpation, when the new emperor retired into seclusion in his palace. This prompted a decurion into a panic, in which he spread the rumour that their new emperor had just been murdered.<sup>65</sup> In response, the soldiers of the Gallic legions, with anxiety (*sollicitudine*), rushed to the palace brandishing their weapons. Here again we are shown how anger was incorporated to mask or displace feelings of helplessness. This then relates to anger

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<sup>62</sup> Jones (1964) 120.

<sup>63</sup> Jones (1964) 125; Burns (2003) 322.

<sup>64</sup> Jones (1964) 120.

<sup>65</sup> Cf. Williams (1997) 64.

determinant number 4, “anxiety, where anger seeks to mask or displace feelings of shame or helplessness.” Ammianus, through reports and his own understanding and interpretation of the events, was able to recount the supposed effects that differing emotions had on prompting the soldiers into quick action (20.4.21).

What we learn from these events is that when the soldiers finally discovered that their emperor was alive and well, they ceased to rage, and once confident that their leader would remain as emperor they were able to direct their anger towards those they understood as the real enemy — the untamed Germanic tribes (20.10.1ff). The soldiers therefore reacted of one accord to the perception that the emperor, whom they had just created, had somehow been taken away from them, and this outrage that they felt led them to exhibit an aggressive response towards the property and attendants of Julian.

### Response to the Tripoli Affair

Ammianus was explicit about the potential threat to groups and individuals that the soldiers presented. This was especially obvious when he described the various rebellious actions prompted by anger and the notions of outrage within the soldiery. There were a number of instances that were recorded by Ammianus that either resulted in the death, or potential death, of various individuals at the hands of the troops. They include the soldiers’ fury (*iratorum militum*) towards the envoy Flaccianus, who was seen to have betrayed them through not providing them with necessary provisions while guarding Tripoli. Here the soldiers’ anger covered their feelings of helplessness (28.6.23).<sup>66</sup> Again, this is closely connected to anger determinant number 4, “anxiety, where anger seeks to mask or displace feelings of shame or helplessness.”

Earlier, Flaccianus along with another envoy, Severus, had been sent by the townspeople of Tripolis to tell Valentinian of the, “lamentable ruin of the province” (*lacrimosas provinciae ruinas*) (28.6.7). This the men did, however the emperor Valentinian, whom they addressed in person, did not believe their statements (28.6.9). What bothered the townspeople of Tripolis was they were

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<sup>66</sup> Cf. Newbold (2002) 45.

suffering not only from a corrupt governor (Romanus), but also from the threat of raids by the Moorish tribes of the desert, which naturally caused them much “anxiety and suspense” (*suspensis et anxiiis*). Both were instigators of the angry reactions of the soldiers who were garrisoned in and around Tripolis.<sup>67</sup>

The reason why the soldiers had not been able to defend Tripolis was the lack of supplies necessary for such an operation.<sup>68</sup> After a series of incidents from which the emperor eventually learnt of the true state of the destruction of this province, he became so angry that he launched an investigation during which several leading figures were executed. Ammianus then described the soldiers’ angry reaction towards Flaccianus who, as the original envoy, had been seen as not having fulfilled his duties in the first place. Ammianus (28.6.24) wrote that Flaccianus was able to safely escape to Rome, where he died of natural causes. The emotional reaction of the soldiers was significant enough for the historian to record for posterity. Ammianus may have held a similar view to the soldiers in regards to Flaccianus and their outrage and this was the same cognitive secondary response that they exhibited towards others whom they condemned. This resembles Cause 6, which is a learnt response to certain situations, as well as Cause 2 (see Introduction). This entire incident is worthy of recording, for it shows that the anger of the soldiers benefited the province. Their anger was said to have caused Flaccianus to be imprisoned and Valentinian was forced to seriously consider the happenings in the province, which in turn led to its relief from distress.

The details of these events in the Latin are confused and are not presented as a coherent narrative. Nevertheless, by using the term *ira* to describe their rage, Ammianus was again trying to demonstrate that the soldiers were on the side of right. Whether the soldiers’ anger was a force for change here is questionable. It is evident that the soldiers had to be paid in order to remain loyal and this paying of largesse by those in authority was something that Tacitus was also well aware of.<sup>69</sup> That the soldiers were not adequately supplied is a recurrent motive behind their anger and notions of outrage. What is relevant here is the imagery that

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<sup>67</sup> Cf. Matthews (1989) 386.

<sup>68</sup> Cf. Warmington (1956) 59.

<sup>69</sup> Cf. Tac. *Ann.* 1.2.1; 1.52.1.

Ammianus incorporated to emphasise the anger of the soldiers and the noise and vibrancy of this representation is reminiscent of scenes described in the text in which the soldiers used threatening noises and gestures in order to intimidate their enemy.

### Religion in the Army

As shown above, *ira* is the term most commonly associated with responses that indicated battle rage. At 16.12.52 for example, Ammianus recorded the *ira* felt by the soldiers towards the Alamanni, “None could be found whose rage was glutted with blood, none who had pity on a man who begged for mercy” (*iram explevit nec satiauit caede multiplici dexteram, vel miseratus supplicantem abscessit*). Here we again have an example of the enemy being slaughtered by the angered troops, but interestingly, it is with the support of the gracious will of an appeased deity, *aderatque propitiati numinis arbitrium clemens* — although the historian does not state who explicitly this deity was — for good reasons. In contrast, the Christian authors such as Gregory of Nazianus and Eusebius<sup>70</sup> who recorded this period, did not hesitate to state that it was God’s will when the army was successful. Ammianus, being a pagan, was naturally hesitant in ascribing victories to the will of the Christian god.

At 16.12.13, we have the interesting concept that Ammianus has combined religious beliefs, perhaps so that he did not cause offence to either party — although he did run the risk of offending both. In his account of the soldiers being led into battle against the tribes of the Alamanni by the Caesar Julian, he described their manifestations of anger along with their eagerness to fight, but then he went on to say that the soldiers trusted in God in Heaven (*caelestis dei*), as well as a sort of helpful guardian spirit (*salutaris genius praesens*). The combination of these two elements suggests that the anger of the soldiers was righteous, as it was supported by supernatural beings — whether Christian or pagan. By emphasising the notion that Julian was being supported by these elements, Ammianus not only highlighted Julian’s purpose as being divinely inspired, but this also provides us with an insight into the author’s

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<sup>70</sup> Cf. Woods (1997) 283f.

own careful viewpoint, for it is clear that he was not prepared to take sides in his historical narrative on the issue of religion. Since Ammianus was, on occasion, a witness to the events in which the soldiers displayed anger, we know that he was fully aware of the importance that religion played in the functioning of the legions as a fighting force. Therefore, one can safely assume that the secondary responses to anger in the soldiery were often subjected to their inherent attitudes and beliefs, and it was those attitudes and beliefs which made up the values of the military, many of which were imbued in their way of thinking for centuries. Chapter 6, which discusses in part the anger of the military in Tacitus, also reveals such similarities.

## CONSEQUENCES OF ANGER IN THE ROMAN MILITARY

### Summary of Consequences for Selves or Others

CONSEQUENCES FOR SELVES OR OTHERS	REFERENCE
Desire to attack the enemy, which was acted upon	25.1.2
Desire to attack an enemy, which was not acted upon	21.13.16, 25.7.4
Destruction of the property of others	17.10.6, 24.4.1, 24.4.25, 27.10.7
Julian responds to the soldiers' fears/demands	20.4.16, 20.8.8
Victory for the Roman soldiers/defeat of the enemy	14.2.17, 16.12.13, 16.12.52, 17.13.9, 17.13.15, 19.5.8, 19.11.14, 24.2.5, 24.4.20, 25.3.10, 26.9.3, 27.10.5
TOTAL 21	

Previously, it was pointed out that battle rage was an extremely useful tool for motivating troops into action, and this cannot be overemphasised. In regards to those instances in which, according to Ammianus, the soldiers collectively and positively unified against the barbarians, if these are grouped according to consequence, then this supports Ammianus' motives for incorporating so many instances of rage amongst the troops, some of which he would

have been personally acquainted with. There were further ramifications for this presentation of the army in the *Res Gestae* for, as the table above shows, there were consequences for the Roman military as well as for others who were affected by their anger.

### The Destructive Behaviour of Soldiers

Ammianus described the destructive attitude of the soldiers when they had no enemies to attack, “while the soldiers, more and more eager for battle, ground their teeth in a threatening way, as if they had already come upon the savages” (27.10.7, tr. J.C. Rolfe).<sup>71</sup> After a lapse of several days, having found no one to take out their frustrations on, the soldiers turned to burning all the fields and dwellings that they came across. When the soldiers felt as though their talents were not being put to good use, or were simply bored, they sometimes put their energies to destructive pursuits. In the majority of instances Ammianus supports the actions of the soldiers, however, when the soldiers behaved in this manner, they were not defended by Ammianus in his terminology. Instead of *ira*, he used the term *infrendo*, with its inherent suggestion of savageness. Compare the behaviour of the soldiers at 16.11.9 where some of Julian’s soldiers were encouraged to cross the Rhine to where a number of the Alamanni were encamped and, “slaughtered everyone they found like sheep, without distinction of age or sex.”

### Unfulfilled Desire to Attack an Enemy

*Furor* is normally a trait ascribed to barbarians,<sup>72</sup> nevertheless, at 25.7.4, the Roman soldiers were excited by hunger and wrath, *furebat...iraque percitus*, and wanted to attack the Persians, but were prevented from carrying out their desire by the Persian envoys. After four days of negotiations their passions were allayed through the provisions that the emperor Jovian was able to provide, after first making a treaty with the Great King Sapor. That this treaty was shameful in the mind of Ammianus, the historian leaves us in

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<sup>71</sup> *Irritatio ad pugnandum, velut repertis barbaris minaciter infrendebat.*

<sup>72</sup> For *furor* as applied to barbarians in Ammianus, see Seager (1986) 57. For *furor* as a term applied to barbarians by the Romans in general, see for example, Dauge (1981) 428–429; Mathisen (2006) 28.

no doubt. But, “Rather, by emphasising the inadequacy of Jovian as a leader during these critical days Ammianus ignores the fact that Jovian had taken over power in an almost desperate situation, for which his predecessor Julian was responsible.”<sup>73</sup>

At 14.7.6 we are shown the consequences that starvation had when the populace of Antioch, driven by famine and anger (*famis et furoris impulsu*), lynched Theophilus, the governor of Syria. This demonstrates that groups, when driven to desperate situations, often behaved violently to save themselves from cruel sufferings. In Book 25 Ammianus described the hunger of the soldiers on a number of occasions, which he, “repeats like an incantation.”<sup>74</sup> At 25.8.6, Ammianus described how the army was forced to kill and eat camels and other pack animals — such was the urgency of their situation. The wellbeing of the troops greatly affected the consciousness of Ammianus, hence his continuous return to these themes.

### Near-Mutinies

The *Res Gestae* is a text filled with accounts of military uprisings, battles, sieges, discontent, humiliation, defeats and victories. Julian himself apparently only usurped power through the incessant protests of his own legions,<sup>75</sup> and Procopius gained and lost power through the whims of his soldiers.<sup>76</sup> Ammianus also detailed the power of anger when the soldiers became intolerant of bad treatment. On occasion this determined whether or not they would support certain leaders, or whether or not they wished someone else to lead them. This awareness of the fickleness of the soldiers

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<sup>73</sup> Boeft (2005) 219–220, quote from 220.

<sup>74</sup> Matthews (1989) 186: 25.1.10; 25.2.1, *commeatibus nos destitutos inedia cruciabat iam non ferenda*; 25.6.4; 25.6.7; 25.8.1.

<sup>75</sup> “Ostensibly reluctant to be proclaimed Augustus, Julian had to endure insults and abuse from angry troops who allegedly saw in such an elevation a means to avoid their transfer to the East (20.4.14),” Newbold (2002) 45.

<sup>76</sup> Cf. 26.6.13, 26.7.17 for the soldiers swearing oaths to Procopius. Soldiers defected from Valens to Procopius, 26.7.17. Soldiers defected from Procopius to Valens, 26.9.7.



meant that the emperors were always conscious of potential threats to their dominion.<sup>77</sup>

As a rule, accounts of mutinies are rare in the historical sources, and when they do occur they show the, “marvellous ingenuousness and excitability of the Roman soldier.”<sup>78</sup> It is also immediately apparent that the anger of the soldiers was a real threat to leaders whom they had initially supported wholeheartedly, and this was behaviour that increasingly had serious repercussions for imperial figures during the Late Roman Empire. The soldiers of Ammianus’ *Res Gestae* were motivated by events that were often capricious and uncertain. This fits in with Cause 4, or anxiety, where anger seeks to mask or displace feelings of helplessness.

At 24.3.3, Ammianus described the effect of potentially mutinous soldiers upon the leadership capabilities of the emperor Julian. Ammianus wrote that Julian promised his soldiers 100 denarii each as a reward for their services, but when he perceived that the small sum excited a mutinous uproar (*cum eos parvitate promissi percitus tumultuare sensisset*) he was roused to deep indignation. That the potential for violence was assuaged is attributed by Ammianus to Julian’s carefully worded address, which discussed the wealth of the Persians as contrasted by the diminished treasury of the Romans, and that the soldiers ought to follow what was right for God and their general, rather than simply material gains. The nature of the soldiers was such that uplifting speeches, as given by popular figures, could calm their wrath, though some notion of personal gains greatly aided in whether or not they remained committed to their commander’s cause.

In the history of Rome, prior to the period which Ammianus recorded in his extant narrative, there were a number of rebellions of the legions that resulted from such things as not being used to their full potential, unjust conditions or demands, or else they were deliberately stirred up by agitators. The historian was well aware of

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<sup>77</sup> Cf. Wardman (1984) 235.

<sup>78</sup> Williams (1997) 71. Therefore it is of added significance when Ammianus described these uprisings in his *Res Gestae*, Williams (1997) 45. However, Messer (1920) 162, speaking of the Republic, claimed that mutinies in the Roman army were far more common than many scholars think.

the rebellious nature of soldiers which, in his accounts, were normally suppressed after only a short period of time. Ammianus wrote in accordance with the literary tradition, yet he presented his argument from the point of view, not of an outsider, but of a man who had personally been involved in the military and understood the nature of its moods. Furthermore, Ammianus' audience, who were recalling these incidents two decades after they occurred, would have had their notions of life within the Roman soldiery reinforced, as it was understood that it was often down to the leaders themselves, rather than simply the bad behaviour of the soldiers, which made them go off track. Ammianus may perhaps have tried to emphasise the sometimes less than adequate leadership of certain emperors, such as Jovian and Julian, rather than the misguided behaviour of the soldiers, who were, after all, exhibiting *ira militum*, rather than the more ill-disciplined emotions of *rabies* or *furor*.

Another mutinous instance during the career of Julian occurred whilst he was Caesar in Gaul in 360. In an attempt to allay the soldiers' anger, Julian informed his troops that he was well aware of their misgivings at leaving for distant lands in the east. He then told them to cease their anger and attempts at revolution (*cesset ira...absque dissensione, vel rerum appetite novarum*) (20.4.16). Julian was alert to the fluctuating mood of his legionaries, who were naturally afraid of strange places (*metuitis loca*), and that their trepidation led to this angry defiance. Anger of this nature, when held by the majority of the soldiers, was a real threat to the very life of the Caesar — although they would have been in even bigger trouble if they had killed him. He was only able to reassure his troops through a carefully worded address, such as he made later on in Persia. In Ammianus' account, the Roman soldiers were men who exhibited extremes in their emotional outbursts, and required not only their fellow soldiers' concordance in matters of emotion, but a strong leader to guide them on to the right emotional path. This therefore relates to anger factor 2, "tendencies to overlook mitigating details before attributing blame."

A further near mutiny occurred at 17.9.2ff, when the soldiers became desperate due to a lack of supplies, and consequently, "Distinctly personal were the insults hurled at Julian by hungry and angry troops: Asiatic, Greekling, cheat, a fool who only seemed wise" (17.9.3). This behaviour was in accordance with factors of

anger, (1) a desire to blame individuals... (4) tendencies to discount the role of uncontrollable factors when attributing causality and (5) punitiveness in response to witnessing mistakes made by others.<sup>79</sup> What is apparent here is that Julian, as a result of the anger of the soldiers, directly felt fear. Ammianus recorded that the praetorian prefect of Gaul, Florentius, also felt a similar dread, for he had fled to Vienne when Julian was hailed as Augustus, as he had treated the Caesar rudely in the past and now feared repercussions (20.8.20). Florentius' action was clear-cut, it was a direct result of fear and the knowledge that the collective passion of the soldiers would develop into a powerful force, which meant that he, without enough supporters, would not be able to survive. This was also evident at 20.4.9, where the absence of the prefect was explained by fear of the mutinies of the soldiers, *motusque militares timentis praefecti*. In this respect, the rebellious behaviour of the army not only affected the career path of Julian, it had ranging effects upon others. And although there is no anger word present at 17.9.2ff, anger, which prompted the soldiers' rebellion, was nevertheless a prevailing force in the flight of Florentius. Both 20.4.9 and 20.8.20 revealed Florentius' fear response to the troops' anger. The consequences of the rage of the soldiers were not always immediate, but could still be potentially damaging to a wide range of groups and individuals.

The anger of the soldiers which led to mutinous behaviour is reflected in the modern behaviourist viewpoint, in which anger was related to the primarily affective emotions of suspicion and paranoia, which often led to indignation and the articulation of blame.<sup>80</sup> Anger forced the soldiers to react either vocally or physically to a perceived threat and was incorporated in order to rectify a perceived or potential hurt being done to them. The soldiers frequently blamed their leaders when they had inadequate supplies or were asked to perform duties they found to be unfair.

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<sup>79</sup> Cf. Auerbach (1953) 53; Williams (1997) 68.

<sup>80</sup> Jasper (1998) 406.

## COMMENTS BY AMMIANUS

### Summary of the Comments by Ammianus

COMMENT	REFERENCE
Ammianus disagrees with the anger of the soldiers	22.3.8
Ammianus' support of the soldiers' anger	24.4.20, 26.9.3, 27.10.5
Deliberate incitement of the soldiers' anger	14.10.3, 16.11.12, 16.12.10
TOTAL 7	

It is apparent from the table above that Ammianus was not always able to remain impartial when it came to recording the emotional reaction of the soldiers. However, we do get direct comments on whether a particular episode was justified or not, although this is very rare. Ammianus did not seem to be as passionate about his judgements in relation to the soldiers as he was, for example, in his portrayal of the emperors. Nevertheless, we are given a clear indication that he wanted his audience to follow and react emotionally to his own personal interpretation of these events. For Ammianus, direct comments were used only for events and incidents that he deemed especially important and that is perhaps why they are so infrequent.

### Deliberate Incitement of the Anger of the Soldiers

Ammianus was aware that the soldiers' anger could be collectively inspired by an individual, and commented on this three times — always in a judgemental way. At 14.10.3 he recounted that the pagan aristocrat Rufinus, also the uncle of Gallus, was sent to Châlon to explain to the angry soldiers (*miles...saeviebat*) why their supplies of provisions were delayed.<sup>81</sup> Ammianus (14.10.5) made the comment that this was likely so that he would be killed by the troops; for Constantius and his advisers feared the power of Rufinus and wanted him removed so that he would not threaten

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<sup>81</sup> Cf. 14.10.4; 20.8.8.

the emperor's manoeuvrings against Gallus.<sup>82</sup> It is also possible that this episode arose from a new factor affecting society, in which there had now arisen, "antagonism between the civilian and military élites."<sup>83</sup> Rufinus was a civilian and Ammianus (14.10.4) stated that the soldiers, "are traditionally rough and brutal in their behaviour to civil functionaries." This did not detract from the blame put on Constantius, but reinforced the view that the emperor would use any means at his disposal to rid himself of potential enemies.

At 16.11.12, Ammianus described a similar plan by Constantius to have Julian removed, not inconceivably, by the very soldiers who served under him. Ammianus reported the distress in Gaul and alleged that Julian had been sent there, not to relieve the people from hardship, but so that he might perish. It was then alleged that Barbatio, the *magister peditum* under Constantius, was in on the plot. He refused to aid Julian and burnt supplies that Julian's troops needed.<sup>84</sup> Naturally, when the soldiers learnt of this, they were transported into rage. This was a deliberate political device incorporated to remove, or at least subdue, real or potential threats, whether they were individuals such as Julian, or groups of unruly mobs or barbarian enemies. Similarly, Ammianus commented on Julian's own deliberate motivation of the Roman soldiers to anger, which was a deliberate ploy in order to subdue a threat to Julian and his protectorate. Here the historian supported the Caesar's approach, and mentioned it in conjunction with a protective guardian spirit.<sup>85</sup>

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<sup>82</sup> Seager (1999) 580 wrote, "It is hard to believe in this tale, which seems to discredit Constantius by presenting him as more concerned with political bloodletting than with the welfare of the provinces." See also Edbrooke (1976) 49, "The overriding policy was never to keep a man in office whose loyalty might be questioned."

<sup>83</sup> Frank (1967) 316.

<sup>84</sup> Ammianus twice described Barbatio as a coward, 16.11.7; 17.6.2. Cf. Woods (1995) 267. Barbatio was executed for treason in 359. Cf. Lenssen (1999) 40.

<sup>85</sup> Cf. Althoff (1998) 4.

### Ammianus' Criticism of the Soldiers

In these comments we get a distinct understanding of Ammianus' own opinions as to whether or not he supported the attitudes and behaviour of the soldiers, as well as those who incited their angry reactions. As we have seen, the attitude of Ammianus towards the soldiers was normally supportive, however, at 22.3.7–8, it is clear that Ammianus did not approve of the behaviour of the soldiers who killed Ursulus, the *comes sacrarum largitionum* under Constantius.<sup>86</sup> The historian did not condone this behaviour as morally correct, even given the circumstances, for the soldiers' anger had come as a response to comments Ursulus had made against their generals when he surveyed the ashes of Amida<sup>87</sup> with Julian. He was said to have exclaimed, "Behold with what courage the cities are defended by our soldiers, for whose abundance of pay the wealth of the empire is already becoming insufficient" (22.11.5).<sup>88</sup> Julian excused the behaviour of the soldiers by saying that the count's death was due to the, "resentment of the military" (*militaris ira*). The comment was unfortunate, but was natural, given his station as *comes* of the *largitiones*. He was conscious of the difficulties of extracting funds from the provinces to pay the wages of the troops.<sup>89</sup> It is apparent that Ammianus believed the death of Ursulus to be unjust and that Julian was responsible rather than the soldiers, for he said of this event that, "Justice herself must have wept," and also accused the emperor of ingratitude (22.3.7).

When it was intended that Julian should be deprived of the means to grant donatives to his troops in Gaul, so that he would be exposed to the danger of mutiny, Ursulus, had ordered the treasury to pay Julian whatever he needed. When Ursulus was killed Julian realised that he would be implicated and to absolve himself he claimed that the murder had been committed without his knowledge (22.3.8).<sup>90</sup> In fact, during this period, Julian had set up the Tribunal of Chalcedon so that military leaders could try

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<sup>86</sup> On the death of Ursulus, see Seager (1986) 35.

<sup>87</sup> Although Amida was a defeat for the Romans, they withstood the might of the Persian army for two and a half months, Austin (1983) 60. Cf. Seager (1997) 257; Blockley (1988) 251.

<sup>88</sup> Cf. Blockley (1988) 259.

<sup>89</sup> Jones (1964) 624.

<sup>90</sup> Cf. Frank (1967) 317; Woods (1997) 275; Matthews (1989) 281.

civilians whom they held a grudge against. However, when the unpopularity of such a measure was made known, the emperor saw fit to blame his soldiers.

### **Ammianus' Support of the Soldiers' Anger**

This leads us to an incident in which Ammianus quite clearly supports the angered behaviour of the soldiers. In this they were behaving under the instructions of their commanding officers and thus exhibiting the *virtus* expected of them on the battlefield. Ammianus was supportive of those soldiers serving under Procopius,<sup>91</sup> for they were obeying orders as they were trained, even though, not once, does his language ever come close to supporting the behaviour or actions of this particular usurper. When Procopius incited the anger of the soldiers, encouraging them to defend the little daughter of Constantius and her mother Faustina against the army of Valens,<sup>92</sup> Ammianus wrote at 26.9.3 that this was like the Macedonians, who, when on the point of engaging with the Illyrians, placed their infant king in a cradle behind the battle line, so that the soldiers would fight harder in his defence (cf. Just. *Epit.* 7.2.5ff.).<sup>93</sup> Ammianus' language was surprisingly not disapproving of this either, for he wrote, *inventā est enim occasio perquam opportuna*, and perhaps he simply saw this as a clever tactical move, rather than something unethical. For, regardless, he manifestly disapproved of Procopius' actions.

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<sup>91</sup> A relative of Julian, he made a claim to the throne through the alleged promise by Julian to appoint him as successor. Julian had recently promoted him to the rank of *comes rei militaris*. Procopius managed to enlist some regiments from Thrace and seized Constantinople, see Jones (1964) 139. On the revolt of Procopius, see for example Austin (1972a) 187–194. A fairly dated, but still relevant article is by Solari (1932) 143–148.

<sup>92</sup> Cf. Matthews (1989) 196, 199.

<sup>93</sup> Of the Roman example, Austin (1979) 191 wrote, “Evidently Procopius was making quite sure that they would not fall into the hands of his opponents and so be lost as a form of emotional pressure to be used on the army.”

## CONCLUSION

Ammianus drew a distinct contrast between the Roman military who were meant to behave in a certain way and those who opposed and repelled them. This came across especially in their interactions with barbarian peoples. For Ammianus, with his typically moralistic background, this was of truly paramount importance to his portraiture of the behaviour of individuals in a collective sense. Much of the portrayals of the soldiery came across with a sense of violence and bloodshed, and these brooding insights may have reflected Ammianus' own dark mood, as well as the "hopelessly defensive situation" of the time, for Ammianus was very aware of the importance for Rome to retain power and influence over these peoples.<sup>94</sup>

The Roman military in the history of Ammianus was presented as easily prone to rage and this made the army a very real threat, and this was something that Ammianus did not hesitate to present to his audience. This feature made the legions important tools for various leaders in the *Res Gestae*. For the historian related the significant impact of the soldiers upon the fortunes of different individuals, right from the beginning of Book 14 and the account of Gallus and his popularity with the troops, up until the final book and the defeat of Valens at Adrianople. Ammianus did not go into any moral arguments regarding this support. However, being a soldier himself perhaps meant that he was in a way biased towards his fellow men, no matter his objections towards the common soldiers in general.<sup>95</sup>

For such a strong supporter of the Roman military, it is interesting that Ammianus placed much emphasis on the rebellious nature of the soldiers in certain instances, such as at 20.4.16, when Julian was Caesar in Gaul. His soldiers angrily defied their orders to travel to the east, and as a consequence Julian told the soldiers to cease their anger (*cesset ira*). Also, at 28.6.23 Ammianus recorded the soldiers' angry reaction towards the envoy Flaccianus, who was seen to have betrayed them. The soldiers rushed at him, shouting abuse, reasoning that it had been impossible to protect the Tripolitans because Flaccianus had refused to provide the supplies

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<sup>94</sup> Auerbach (1953) 60; Seager (1986) 68.

<sup>95</sup> On Ammianus' military experience and personal reflections, cf. Matthews (1989) 287 ff.; Crump (1975) 28f.



necessary for the operation. The historian was careful to present important reasons for the behaviour of the troops in all these instances. Perhaps they often seemed to him to be justified, for all they were demanding was what was, or seemed to be, fair. Nonetheless, their historical significance was also an issue that Ammianus was well aware of, and this was an important reason for these additions into the *Res Gestae*. The soldiers, as a competent military force, were doing 'great things' for their emperor, and as such should have been amply rewarded, however, oftentimes they were not. This would have affected Ammianus who, with his typically authoritarian personality, believed in treating those who behaved well with due credit. Occasionally things did get out of hand and a leader was not always in a position to properly reward, or even to feed, his troops. We have seen such instances at 14.10.3, when Rufinus was forced to explain to the angry soldiers why their supplies of provisions were delayed. Also at 25.7.4, when the anger of the soldiers at the misery of their situation forced Jovian into making a shameful treaty with the Persian king Sapor. As Ammianus presented the troops, the anger of the soldiers did indeed have a most significant influence upon the emperors and other important figures of the Later Roman Empire.

Apart from anger, the emotions that significantly motivated the soldiers to mutinous behaviour were the powerful passions of fear and sorrow. When the soldiers stationed in Paris learnt of the order from Constantius that they should be sent to the East, away from their families and from their beloved leader Julian, they were, *dolore duplici suspensi discesserunt et maesti* (20.4.13). At first they were said to be simply possessed by sorrow (*angore*), but then remained quiet in their quarters as if consoled. However, they must have talked to and fired each other up, for Ammianus (20.4.14) then wrote that when night fell, the soldiers, as if as one, broke out into open revolt, as a result of their distress (*insperato res afflictabat*) at their situation. By emphasising the terrible noise (*horrendis clamoribus concrepabant*) that the soldiers made outside the palace of Julian, he echoed the descriptions of the soldiers at the beginning of each battle, making a terrifying din in order to intimidate the enemy. According to the historian, the response of Julian was to make a calming speech in order to appease them (20.4.15). Here we have primary emotions, fear and grief, which were transposed into anger

and manifested through noisy and aggressive behaviour. The soldiers' wrath was coupled with the appraised cognitive response of outrage at a perceived injustice. Julian was able to understand and react to the emotional outburst of the soldiers and satisfactorily ended this particular mutiny.

As already pointed out, in every instance in which Ammianus discussed the anger of the military, it was always in a collective sense, for no individuals were singled out. Collective anger in turn suggests unification — whereas the collectivism of the barbarians was not always so enduring and their discipline was never emphasised. This was apparent in Ammianus' description of the Battle of Strasbourg,<sup>96</sup> when he drew a distinction between the bravery and discipline of the Roman soldiers with the disorder of the Alamanni. At 16.12.44 he recorded that, "the barbarians lost all order; their rage and fury blazed like fire, as they set themselves to cleave asunder with repeated sword-strokes the shields, closely interlaced in tortoise formation, which protected our men." The constant unification of the Romans who fought in tight formations meant that the more undisciplined barbarians were defeated. As the barbarians were outside the realm of civilisation there was no sympathy felt for them, whereas the gloriousness of the Roman victory was emphasised in Ammianus' emphatic language.

In contrast to the savage anger of the barbarians, *ira militum*, which was expressed by the Roman military, was associated with Roman Republican value terms, with perhaps the most important Roman value being *virtus*. *Virtus* was proved by a man's actions, usually on the battlefield. This extended back to Greek philosophic ideals of *thumos*.<sup>97</sup> *Thumos* was the idea of valour amongst soldiers, "according to which courageous citizens display their patriotism by the spirit of anger (*thumos*) with which they pursue not peace or justice but honor (*time*) and fame (*kleos*)."<sup>98</sup> This was not just honour and fame for the individual, but honour and fame for their particular leader and, in a Roman sense, for the empire and the emperor for whom they essentially were fighting. As well as this,

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<sup>96</sup> On the Battle of Strasbourg, cf. Seager (1999) 589, "Ammianus' choice of words again highlights their (the Alamanni's) insolence, savagery, and frenzy."

<sup>97</sup> Cf. Koziak (1999) 1069; Fisher (2002) 190.

<sup>98</sup> Salkever (1986) 235.

*thumos* was the desire for self-preservation, something that the Roman military was constantly fighting for. According to Aristotle (*Pol.* 7.7) *thumos* was also linked to citizenship, love and friendship:

Now, passion (*thumos*) is the quality of the soul which begets friendship and enables us to love; notably the spirit (anger) within us is more stirred against our friends and acquaintances than against those who are unknown to us when we think that we are despised by them...a lofty spirit is not fierce by nature, but only when excited against evil doers. And this, as I was saying before, is a feeling which men show most strongly towards their friends if they think they have received a wrong at their hands...

In this sense, *thumos* was felt more strongly when an individual felt slighted by a lover, a friend or a family member, than by a stranger.<sup>99</sup>

Furthermore, those who incorporated anger for the right reasons in their physical actions and literary discourse were doing it for the benefit of emphatic ideals, which supported either Greek or Roman notions of justice. For example, at 17.13.9, the soldiers were fighting collectively to defend the life of the emperor (here 'emperor' refers to the Caesar Julian) who was being hotly menaced by the enemy, *eosque imperatori (ut dictum est) acriter imminentes*. Hence we have the troops fighting for a virtuous cause, and their honourable actions invoked feelings of security for the Caesar, as well as fighting for and defending their own lives. This then embodied the Greek ideal of *thumos* as well as Roman *virtus*. Ammianus associated *virtus* not just with the soldiers, but with their commanders as well, especially when this was in accordance with *prudentia* and *temperantia*, and with a leader who was prepared to show mercy to his soldiers, especially in regards to the emperor Julian.<sup>100</sup>

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<sup>99</sup> Fisher (2002) 191.

<sup>100</sup> Sabbah (2003) 74. Julian was described as *cautior sui* at Argentoratum, 16.12.29. Theodosius was *ut pugnator cautus et prudens* in Africa, 29.5.39. Frigeridus was *cautus et diligens*, 31.10.22, and *regendi conservandique militis non ignarus*, 31.9.2. Ammianus reported that Julian cultivated the four cardinal virtues as assigned by the philosophers, i.e.

The moralistic historian stood thoroughly behind those whom he wished to promote as exceedingly positive and those whom he regarded as the worst types. Though it was rare, his comments did reveal the occasional praise or blame which was direct and not hidden behind his rhetoricising language.<sup>101</sup> There were actions and events that the historian used often quite effectively to promote particular behaviour, and the soldiers fitted into this pattern well. Indeed, the Roman military conformed even better than his most praised figure, the emperor Julian. For example, at 26.9.3, Ammianus was supportive of the obedient Roman soldiers serving under Procopius, even as they took with them, Constantius' daughter and her mother Faustina, which made the soldiers fight more passionately for their leader. These comments of Ammianus proved particularly useful in defining precisely the praise given to the soldiers, as he saw himself as one of them — although as an officer. However, blame does come through just as strongly, for example, when criticising the weakness of the military in the fourth century, he stated, “they are clearly unaware that their forefathers (especially the warlike Trajan) through whom the greatness of Rome was so far flung, gained renown not by riches but by fierce wars...” (14.6.10).<sup>102</sup>

Ammianus supported the soldiers' anger when it positively supported Rome and her ideals. Ammianus was thoroughly on the side of the defenders of his personal beliefs and even though the military was not a true bastion of principle, the historian did his best to promote that feeling.

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*temperantia*, *prudentia*, *iustitia* and *fortitudo*, 25.4.1. Then he added, “certain practical gifts,” which the emperor also retained, *scientia rei militaris*, *auctoritas*, *felicitas* and *liberalitas*, Ammianus sought to express the ways in which Julian demonstrated these virtues in his obituary, cf. Matthews (1983) 35.

<sup>101</sup> On Ammianus' use of rhetoric, including *exempla* and digressions, see Laistner (1971) 147.

<sup>102</sup> Cf. Sabbah (2003) 79.



## 2. ANGER AND PERSIANS AND BARBARIANS

To reprove a man when he is angry and in turn to become  
angry at him serves only to increase his anger

(Seneca, *De ira*, 3.40.1)

### INTRODUCTION

Although Libanius (*Or.* 19.16) instructed his reader that goodwill towards barbarians was recommended on occasion, this theme was rarely apparent in Ammianus' portrayal of these non-Mediterranean groups, particularly when they were in direct opposition to Roman military forces, or had caused a major turnaround in imperial rule. For example, after the defeat at the Battle of Adrianople, Ammianus (31.16.8) wrote of Julius the *comes et magister militum* that:

Learning of the disasters in Thrace, he sent secret orders to those in charge of the Goths who had been transferred earlier to Asia, and dispersed in various cities and fortresses. These commanders were all Romans, an unusual thing at the present time. The Goths were to be collected quite unsuspecting outside the walls in the expectation of receiving the pay that they had been promised, and at a given signal all put to death on one and the same day. This wise plan was carried out without fuss or delay, and the provinces of the East saved from serious danger.

The majority of the barbarians in the *Res Gestae* were described as savage, uncultured and uncivilised.<sup>1</sup> In these portrayals,

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. Mathisen (2006) 27.

Ammianus was in no way different than any historian of his day, for this was a common and effective means of portraying barbarians. For example, when writing of the Odrysians at 27.4.9, he stated that they “wandered about without culture or laws.”<sup>2</sup> From his portrayals, it is apparent that Ammianus held a certain fascination for these foreign peoples and made frequent comparisons between the barbarians and wild beasts. In contrast to the Roman military, the barbarians were described as lacking in discipline and were often associated with terms suggesting madness, anger and frenzy, and they succumbed to emotion often in an animalistic manner. Cicero (*De Or.* 3.223) believed that barbarians were controlled by emotions rather than reason and those who debased the sophisticated *mores* of the Romans were compared to emotion-charged barbarians. So Cicero said of the Catilinarians (*Sull.* 75–6):

A certain kind of new savagery arose; it was an incredible and singular madness...Nor, indeed, was any people so barbarian or so savage, in which not only so many but one single such cruel enemy was found: these wild beasts, savage and feral, arose clothed in the shape of men...

The barbarians in turn filled the Romans with many emotions, not least, the emotion of fear. To counter this fear the Romans created a discourse on the barbarians which strengthened their own notions of civilisation against barbarian aggression and ferocity.<sup>3</sup> They also stressed courage, discipline and order over barbarian indiscipline and disorder. Throughout Roman literary history accounts of barbarians were full of negative connotations to balance the mistrust that they invoked in the Romans. This led

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<sup>2</sup> Cf. Seager (1999) 579; Camus (1967) 116. See especially 22.8, 23.6, 27.4, and 31.2 for the Huns. The Scythians, 22.8.42, 22.8.34, 22.8.38. The Odrysae, 27.4.9f.

<sup>3</sup> That the antithesis between civilization and barbarism was refuted in 1889 by Jean Gimazane in his *Ammien Marcellin* 361–365 in regards to King Pap of Armenia, is not doubted by the author, however, there are definitive objections to Gimazane’s point of view that this study on anger reveals. See conclusion of the current chapter for a fuller debate. Cf. Blockley (1975) 62–72; Dauge (1981).

some moralists, such as Seneca (*De ira* 3.17), to state that the barbarians were far more likely to become angry than those who were peaceful and learned. Libanius (*Or.* 19.13) commented on the nature of the barbarians, “In this regard in particular I find the Greeks also to be superior to barbarians. The latter are akin to beasts in despising pity, while the Greeks are quick to pity and get over their wrath.” Velleius Paterculus (2.117.3) also associated barbarians with wild animals, and to him the Germans were those “who have nothing of humanity except for a voice and limbs.” Galen (*De sanitate* 1.10.17) shared a similar view, and stated that, “I am not writing for Germans, or for some other savages or barbarian peoples, nor, for that matter, for bears or lions or boars or any other wild animals.” The fourth century poet Prudentius (*c. Symmachus*, 2.816–819) also wrote, “But the Roman is as distant from the barbarian as the quadruped is separate from the biped or the mute from the speaking.”<sup>4</sup>

In reference to the above authors, Mathisen claimed, “But it was Ammianus who used the image of barbarians as beasts to the greatest effect.”<sup>5</sup> For example, at 16.5.16–17, Ammianus wrote of the Alamanni that in 356, “The barbarian madness again blazed up more greatly. Just like beasts, when their guards are negligent, are accustomed to live by pillaging, they too repeatedly carried off booty.”<sup>6</sup> At 31.8.9 the Goths sacked Thrace, “like wild beasts whose cages had been broken open.” Then at 31.15.2 the Goths attacked Adrianople, “like wild beasts driven more savagely mad by the incitement of blood.” At 28.6.13 the Austoriani, “Flew in like rapacious birds, driven more savagely mad by the incitement of blood.” At 14.2.2 the Isaurians were, “like wild beasts who, driven by hunger, return particularly to that place where they once were fed.” Before Julian’s arrival the barbarians ‘ran riot’ in Gaul.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> For other comparisons of barbarians to wild beasts in antiquity, see Dauge (1981) 605–609. See Newbold (1990) 265 for comparisons between humans and beasts in Ammianus. Blockley (1975) 183 has a list of 52 references between humans and beasts in Ammianus.

<sup>5</sup> Mathisen (2006) 31.

<sup>6</sup> The identity of those groups who were defined by the Romans as the ‘Alamanni’ was discussed by Hummer (1998) 1–27. Cf. Drinkwater (2007), esp. chapters 7 and 8.

<sup>7</sup> On the *licentia* of the barbarians, see Seager (1986) 26f.



Julian's task was to subdue and impart the Roman civilising influence upon these groups.

Similar themes of barbarism recur right throughout the *Res Gestae*, and always Ammianus was conscious to present the Romans as far better opponents, with their discipline and their just cause. However, as we shall see, the barbarians in a number of instances were driven to anger through injustices and outrages and, to Ammianus' credit, he did reveal that their wrath was often a pertinent response. Even Plato acknowledged that anger was, at times, linked with justice:

For cruel and almost or wholly irreparable wrongs at the hands of others are only to be escaped in one way, by victorious encounter and repulse, and stern correction, and such action is impossible for the soul without generous passion.

(*Leg.* 5.731b)

This notion, that anger and justice/injustice is linked, has been the focus of modern research, where it is shown that anger, whether empathic or not, can be associated with injustice and the need to rectify that injustice.<sup>8</sup> Ammianus reveals this on a number of occasions in relation to the barbarians.

Apart from the anger terms that we shall look at in this chapter, in the literary tradition barbarians were also associated with such terms as *crudelitas* (cruelty), *feritas* (wildness), *immanitas* (savagery), *inhumanitas* (inhumanity), *impietas* (impiety), *ferocitas* (ferocity), and *discordia* (discord).<sup>9</sup> The purpose of all this was, of course, to create literary effect. It enabled Ammianus and other authors to present the barbarians as 'bad' and the Romans as 'good'. The Romans had a level to measure their own behaviour against and this was an effective means of reinforcing their own perceptions of what it was to be 'Roman'. This is where values such as *virtus*, *honos*, *dignitas*, and so forth, all came to the fore, as Ammianus presented his barbarians with their vices and how the Romans perceived this so that they reinforced their own *mores*. The portrayals of Romans as being successful over barbarians made the victors feel good and secure about themselves, for "the more

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<sup>8</sup> Hoffman (2000) 228.

<sup>9</sup> Mathisen (2006) 28.

terrifying the barbarian threat seemed, the greater the glory of the victory.”<sup>10</sup>

The notion that barbarians were not concerned with justice is doubtful. When one starts to examine the causes of anger there comes to light a number of justifiable reasons why the barbarians reacted with indignation at certain actions and the behaviour of others. This may in part explain the activities of the Isaurians that Ammianus discussed in chapter two of book fourteen. Their outrage was illuminated at 14.2.1 where Ammianus described how some of their compatriots were thrown to the wild beasts in the amphitheatre at Iconium.<sup>11</sup> The furious reaction (*saevientes*) of the Burgundian kings at the behaviour of Valentinian was also a classic example of barbarian outrage, even though they had every right to be incensed at his treatment of them. For when the emperor failed to honour his agreements towards them, they felt as though they had been mocked (*ludibrio habiti*) and consequently they killed all their prisoners and returned home.<sup>12</sup>

There were other reasons for the barbarians to exert their feelings of injustice and outrage, and often this involved pressures on their perceived territory. This occurred at 29.6.2, when Ammianus recorded that the Quadi reacted indignantly (*indigne*) to the infringement upon their rights when the Romans constructed a garrison camp across the Danube on their lands. Although the Quadi sent a delegation to Valentinian, they did nothing further at that moment. The debate into Roman expansion into foreign territories is something that scholars have recently placed much focus upon, and the reasons and causes for this expansion are debateable.<sup>13</sup>

It was only natural that the often aggressive expansionist policies of the Romans would cause much concern for those not yet subjugated. The Quadi were a group who made their indignation known, but the Romans had to face far more

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<sup>10</sup> Mathisen (2006) 32. Heather (1999b) 235 continued this theme, “No Roman victory was complete without...subservient barbarians.”

<sup>11</sup> Most likely these were bandits, see Honey (2006) 53. See Shaw (1984) 3–52 for the identification of those whom the Romans considered to be ‘bandits’. Cf. Grünwald (1999).

<sup>12</sup> Newbold (2002) 50.

<sup>13</sup> See e.g. Isaac (1992) 20.

aggressive opponents, and these will be discussed further on. The fact that the Romans were military conquerors who sought to subdue lands and groups was not a burden on their conscience. The Romans believed wholeheartedly that the spread of Roman civilisation was for the benefit of those whom they came into contact with. The panegyricist, Latinus Pacatus Drepanius, uttered before the emperor Theodosius, "Any nation of barbarians that was troublesome for us on account of their strength, ferocity, or numbers, either looked to its best interest and quieted down, or rejoiced if it could serve us as a friend" (*Pan. Lat.* 12.2.22). That the barbarians would think differently was put down to simply having a less developed belief system, and they would, in time, understand and appreciate what the Romans brought to them.<sup>14</sup>

Another issue was the problem of supplying manpower to the Roman military. The unpopularity of the army, coupled with the bad reputation the service had, accounted for much when it came to the reasons why the Romans no longer wanted to enlist in the military.<sup>15</sup> Barbarian recruits were the natural solution. By the fourth and fifth-century the army recruited its soldiers from both inside and outside the empire.<sup>16</sup> By the end of the fourth century there had apparently been, "a barbarisation, or more accurately, an un-Romanization, of the army."<sup>17</sup> As well as this, Roman citizens, in particular those from the upper classes, refused to be enlisted in the military.<sup>18</sup> Emperors came up through the ranks of the military and these were men who, like Valentinian, were closely associated with the rank and file. Their uncivilised behaviour and lack of refinement was seen to affect the basis for the governance of the Empire.<sup>19</sup> By the end of the century the army was employing barbarian troops as

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<sup>14</sup> On barbarians being conquered and subjugated by the Romans, see for example, S.H.A. *Probus* 15.2; Zos. 1.46; S.H.A. *Claudius* 9.4; Them *Or.* 15.186b; Pan Vet 7(6).6.2; A.M. 17.13.3, 28.5.4; 29.4.7; 30.6.1.

<sup>15</sup> Southern & Dixon (1996) 53.

<sup>16</sup> Elton (1996) 128.

<sup>17</sup> MacMullen (1964) 446.

<sup>18</sup> Hence Diocletian had allowed landholders to substitute money for men, which was known as the *aurum tironicum*, Rostovtseff (1918) 27; Jones (1964) 1098 n. 31; Brunt (1974) 114; Potter (2004) 458.

<sup>19</sup> Potter (1990) 13; Charanis (1975) 554.

mercenaries in defence against other barbarians. The Roman military was in a sense 'Romanising' these recruits, even those from outside the frontiers. These were largely drawn from areas which had been through generations of interaction with the Roman Empire, through trade, local employment, or a tradition of military service.<sup>20</sup> However, traditionalists, such as Ammianus, saw the immersion of barbarians into all aspects of Roman society as deeply troubling. Thus at 26.4.5 a list is given of those whom Ammianus considered to be the most savage peoples (*gentes saevissimae*) which threatened the Roman frontiers: they were the Alamanni, the Sarmatians, the Quadi, the Picts, Scots, Attacotti, the Austoriani, Moors and Goths. It is quite apparent that he considered practically all groups who were not completely under Roman dominion to be an active threat.

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**Table 2.1. Summary of Anger Words  
that Refer to Persians and Barbarians**

Book	Number of Anger Words
14	1
15	1
16	8
17	1
18	1
19	10
20	4
21	0
22	0
23	0
24	0
25	2
26	0
27	2
28	3
29	5
30	0
31	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>43</b>

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<sup>20</sup> Nicasie (1998) 114.

Table 2.1 reveals that Ammianus portrayed direct instances of anger in barbarians and Persians 43 times, only 2 more than the Roman military. The *Res Gestae* contains a significant amount of anger words that are used to refer to the anger of Persians and barbarians. These figures are comparable with, and are indeed slightly higher than, the instances of anger in the Roman military. The anger word used most frequently for those whom Ammianus referred to as barbarians was *furor*. The word used most often to indicate anger in the Persians was *ira*, as it was for the Roman military. However, *ira* was used only in reference to Persian kings. In fact, Sapor was shown by Ammianus to exhibit direct anger more times than the entirety of the Persian soldiers. This may demonstrate that Ammianus placed more focus on the Persian king rather than on the troops he was in charge of. This was similar to anger references for the Roman emperors and their soldiers, where the anger of the emperors, in specific instances, outweighed that of their troops.

The anger of the Persians and barbarians was different to that of the Roman military, whose emotions were sometimes essential in the decision as to whether or not they should follow a certain leader. In this chapter the decision to follow a leader, especially in regards to the Persians, was not influenced so much by their anger, but rather it was their leaders' specific commands that incited them into action, and which they dared not disobey. The contention in this chapter is that the relationship between anger and Persians and barbarians occurred more in the context of inciting battle rage in the armed forces, than to unite them against their leaders in mutinous behaviour.

## THE CAUSES OF ANGER IN BARBARIANS

### Summary of the Causes of Anger in Barbarians

CAUSE OF ANGER	REFERENCE
Notions of outrage at an insult, disrespect or injustice	16.12.34, 17.13.7, 18.2.14, 28.5.13, 28.6.4, 29.5.46, 29.6.2, 29.6.6, 29.6.12, 31.5.5, 31.5.7, 31.10.5
Threats or frustration as a result of Roman actions	15.4.9, 31.13.10

CAUSE OF ANGER	REFERENCE
Battle Rage	14.2.14, 16.12.36, 16.12.44, 16.12.46, 16.12.49, 19.11.15
TOTAL 20	

### Outrage of the Barbarians

The largest number of instances of the anger of the barbarians was caused by their perceptions of outrage, insult or disrespect. Ammianus did not give descriptions of the underlying causes of barbarian anger the same degree of righteous indignation that he often did when he described the Roman soldiers' judgement of what constituted an affront. Nevertheless, indignation was apparent when the Quadi received word that the Romans had murdered their king Gabinius (29.6.6). This relates to our first anger factor, "a desire to blame individuals," as well as to the second determinant of anger, "a sense of betrayal, when there is an acute awareness of disappointment" (see Introduction). Having been roused to madness (*effervit*) by this news the barbarians set out to devastate the lands across the Danube in misdirected revenge.

The Thervingi<sup>21</sup> also exhibited outrage when they perceived that some of their kindred were being carried off by force by the Romans, no doubt to be used as slaves. As a consequence of their rage, they killed and stripped the arms from a large troop of Roman soldiers (31.5.5). Initially relations between these groups of barbarians and Romans had benefited each other, but the injustices caused by the Romans towards the Huns and Goths<sup>22</sup> led to a

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<sup>21</sup> Also called the Tervingi/Goths; a Gothic confederation of tribes. They had been allowed to cultivate lands in Thrace. It was believed by the advisors of Valens that such a large contingent would swell the ranks of the soldiery and thus he could suspend conscription in the provinces. In late autumn 376 the Goths were brought across the Danube, Jones (1964) 152.

<sup>22</sup> Ammianus regarded the Goths disdainfully from his first descriptions of them (22.7.8), thus they were *saepe fallaces et perfidos*. However, at 31.4.10–11, he denounced the unfair dealings that the Goths received at the hands of corrupt Roman commanders, Sabbah (2003) 75 n.133.

dramatic turnaround which would eventually see the Roman defeat at the Battle of Adrianople (a direct result of the falling apart of the patron client relationship<sup>23</sup>), which formed the conclusion of Ammianus' *Res Gestae*.<sup>24</sup>

A very similar occurrence happened at 31.5.7, when the Thervingi believed that their king Fritigern<sup>25</sup> had been killed, and as a consequence the barbarians raged against this perceived injustice.<sup>26</sup> As a result of this unrest, Fritigern was able to convince the Romans, who were holding him and his companions as hostages, to release him, so that he might pacify his countrymen — this type of calculating behaviour was typical in the portraiture of the barbarians by Ammianus (31.5.7).

It is of no surprise that barbarian anger was something that the Romans were particularly concerned with, and consequently Ammianus wanted to record these episodes for posterity, to portray the general discord and conflict of the times (although barbarian anger was not the only factor).

The causes of anger were often the result of deliberate actions by the Romans, such as their deplorable treatment of the Huns and Goths who retaliated with savagery that far exceeded the bounds of Roman expectation. The historian could not be said to maintain any objectivity when he presented the Huns as, “the seed-bed and origin of all this destruction and of the various calamities” (*totius...sementem exitii et cladum originem diversarum*). At 28.5.13 we are given a very clear example of the Romans being directly responsible for the outrage of the barbarians, and even to Ammianus' audience, this perception of an injustice was very clear. For here, Ammianus recorded the outrage of the Burgundians who had been requested by Valentinian to invade the areas in which the

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<sup>23</sup> See Burns (2003) 344.

<sup>24</sup> Cf. Tomlin (1979) 476.

<sup>25</sup> For the interaction between Fritigern and the Romans, see Burns (1994) 26f; (2003) 339f.

<sup>26</sup> In 378 Fritigern was able to make good use of his strong support and by forming an alliance with the Huns, Goths and Alans he besieged Constantinople, 31.16.3.

Alamanni lived,<sup>27</sup> but instead they felt betrayed and deceived when he then refused to join forces with them. To add further insult to injury, the emperor ignored their repeated requests after he had neglected to meet with them on the appointed day. Valentinian's deceit backfired upon him, for the Burgundians, a proud people who believed themselves descended from the Romans from ancient times (28.5.11), understood that they deserved better treatment, and the consequence of their fury at being mocked (*ut lubibrio habiti saevientes*) was to kill all their Roman prisoners. This episode reinforces the notion that there were often justifiable reasons behind certain angry acts of the barbarians, who were, after all, frequent candidates for joining the Roman army.<sup>28</sup> The barbarians were simply trying to rectify an injustice, a natural human reaction felt towards a slight. This is then associated with determinant of anger number 2, "a sense of betrayal, when there is an acute awareness of disappointment," (see the Introduction).

Finally, to support this further, Ammianus (29.6.2) recorded that the Quadi reacted indignantly (*indigne*) to the infringement of their rights when the Romans constructed a garrison camp across the Danube in their territory. Previously, the Quadi had accepted contraforts, for Valentinian and Constantius had built nine of them between Aquincum (Budapest) and Singidunum (Belgrade).<sup>29</sup> The Romans had not yet subjugated this region, but for a while the Quadi remained quiet. It was only when the Romans killed their king Gabinius that they were finally pushed too far.

### Anger and the Behaviour of Barbarian Leaders

Perhaps the most frequent allusions to the anger of the barbarians are the descriptions of their wild mannerisms. Ammianus' fondness

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<sup>27</sup> For Valentinian's dealings with the Alamanni, see Drinkwater (1999) 127–138; (2007) chapters 7 and 8.

<sup>28</sup> For the integration of barbarians into the Roman army there are many outstanding studies now available. See for example for the period 100 BC — AD 200, Goldsworthy (1998) 68–75. For the late Roman military, see Southern & Dixon (1996) 46–52; Garnsey & Humfress (2001) 101f. E.g. Them. *Or.* 15.186b wrote that the Galatians that had pillaged Asia were conquered and from then on were, "no longer referred to as barbarians but as Romans."

<sup>29</sup> Burns (2003) 343.



for digressions led him on at least two occasions to describe the wild nature of the barbarians.<sup>30</sup> This is apparent in the following example, which is a noticeable generalisation. In his description of the Gauls he wrote, “The voices of most sound alarming and menacing, whether they are angry or the reverse” (15.12.2). The historian also made a similar generalisation about the Huns,<sup>31</sup> of whom he wrote, “they are so fickle and prone to anger that often in a single day they will quarrel with their allies without provocation, and then make it up again without anyone attempting to reconcile them” (31.2.11). Ammianus saw the Huns as completely ignorant of right and wrong and he portrayed them as having neither religion nor superstition, which added to his condemnation of them.<sup>32</sup> The stereotypes used by Ammianus were of a rhetorical nature, and they served to lessen individuality and to increase the perception that these peoples behaved *en masse*, which dehumanised them and reduced them to the status of ants. This is in contrast to the Roman military, whose unity benefitted and coordinated their disciplined behaviour.

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At 16.12.34 Ammianus described a scene in which the Alamanni, facing the Romans in battle, suddenly became indignant with their own leaders who remained mounted, rather than standing with them. It is apparent that the Alamanni believed that their leaders would abandon them once things took a turn for the worst. This understanding naturally led to indignation (*indignationi*). There is a direct contrast here with Julian, whose actions whilst in Gaul were greatly admired by Ammianus. Without regard for his own safety Julian rode along the front lines of his men, encouraging them to be brave in the face of the enemy. Whilst the Alamanni were afraid

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<sup>30</sup> For this theme, cf. MacMullen (1964) 443, who made the connection between Ammianus’ use of animal imagery and what he would have witnessed in the amphitheatres of the empire. See also Wiedemann (1986) 189–201.

<sup>31</sup> Thompson and Matthews took Ammianus’ descriptions of the Huns at near face value, but this understanding has been strongly criticised, cf. King (1995) 77–95.

<sup>32</sup> Cf. Hunt (1985) 199, n. 84.

that their leaders will desert, the Roman soldiers had no need to lack confidence in their leader. This assurance contributed to the success of the legions against the barbarian enemy, who, if not being incited into battle rage, would lose faith and flee from the front lines. Personal grievances led to divisions, and when this occurred in the Roman military it sometimes lead to mutinies, something that the commanding officers sought to avoid at all costs. As a consequence of the anger of the Alamanni, king Chonodomarius and his followers dismounted and obeyed their soldiers.<sup>33</sup> The anger of the barbarians towards their leaders in such a specific example is only recorded once by Ammianus. If this was a regular occurrence (which is not unlikely), we unfortunately do not have evidence from the historian to give in comparison.

When we look at this episode with the Alamanni in relation to modern sociological thinking, we can assess the Alamanni's behaviour as justifiable in its context. For as the sociologist Jasper points out, feelings of indignation, such as the Alamanni expressed, are related to suspicion and the articulation of blame. Furthermore, this can lead to outrage as those who felt injured found a target for their blame.<sup>34</sup> The Alamanni obviously had just cause for their feelings and were unafraid of showing it.

### Barbarian Anger and the Enemy

Ammianus revealed a number of instances of the barbarians falling into disunity as a consequence of their rage and lack of adequate leadership. For example, Ammianus (16.12.44) recorded of the Alamanni that, "the barbarians lost all order; their rage and fury blazed like fire (*violentia iraque incompressi*), as they set themselves to cleave asunder with repeated sword-strokes the shields, closely interlaced in tortoise formation, which protected our men." It appears from the historian's descriptions of battles that the barbarians were prone to sudden outbursts of anger and were

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<sup>33</sup> On Chonodomarius, see Hummer (1998) 8f. Previously this 'princeps' had defeated Decentius Caesar and pillaged many wealthy cities in Gaul, 16.12.4–5. At 16.12.17 it appeared that another king of the Alamanni, Gundomadus, was killed by his own people when they mutinied against him. Thus Chonodomarius had cause for being alert to a possible mutiny amongst his own men.

<sup>34</sup> Jasper (1998) 406.

unruly and undisciplined in their attacks on the Romans. Contrast the view put forward by Tacitus at *Ann.* 2.45 that by AD 17 the Germans serving under Arminius were more disciplined and behaved in battle order like Romans and carried Roman weapons. For the same period Velleius Paterculus (2.110.5) claimed the same of the Pannonians, who, “possessed not only a knowledge of Roman discipline but also of the Roman tongue, many also had some measure of literary culture, and the exercise of the intellect was not uncommon among them” (*ne res disciplinae tantummodo sed linguae quoque notitia Romanae; plerisque etiam litterarum usus, et familiaris animorum erat exercitatio*).<sup>35</sup>

Often when we talk about anger, it is in the sense that it usually masks fear. Where military engagements were concerned, anger soon dispersed once the lack of leadership was evident. The emotional state of the soldier then reverts to the other primary emotion of fear. This was always devastating for the barbarians and easily exploited by the Romans, such as at the Battle of Strasbourg, where in Ammianus’ account (16.11ff.) the Alamanni gave way to their rage and lost cohesion. The Romans were then able to make significant, and indeed devastating, attacks on their ranks. Anger could be a hindrance, as well as an aid when it came to facing an enemy. This was true for each side, Roman *and* barbarian.<sup>36</sup>

Ammianus’ awareness of the disunity of the barbarians, in opposition to the well-disciplined ranks of the Roman military, came through in his description of one of the battles with the Alamanni in 357, when he contrasts the Alamanni’s height and strength with the Romans’ training and discipline (*Alamanni robusti et celsiores, milites usu nimio dociles*). Furthermore, the barbarians were wild and turbulent, whilst the Romans were deliberate and cautious (*illi feri et turbidi, hi quieti et cauti*), and so on (16.12.47).<sup>37</sup> Again, we have the understanding that the barbarians, as described by

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<sup>35</sup> Cf. Mócsy (1983) 169–178.

<sup>36</sup> For fear inspiring the barbarians to make peace, see 17.1.12, 17.12.13, 17.13.2–3, 19.11.16, 19.11.15, 27.5.3, 29.6.16, 31.12.12. Cf. Seager (1999) 580.

<sup>37</sup> As this is not a specific example of barbarian wrath it is not included in our pool of data. However, it does serve to show the perception the Romans had of the fierce barbarian countenance.

Ammianus, were portrayed as far less organised and disciplined than the Roman troops. Compared with the Roman military, the barbarians exhibited many more irrational manifestations of anger and were prone to outbursts that, on occasion, led to their sudden deaths. Such occurrences were frequent in the *Res Gestae* and this apparent lack of level headedness on behalf of the barbarians was said to have led to the Romans having a great number of successes against them.

The irrational nature of the barbarian comes through clearly when Ammianus reported the fierce fighting during the Battle of Strasbourg.<sup>38</sup> According to his portrayal, it was the excesses of their rage that led them into the greatest trouble, for the Alamanni, in their wild rage, left their sides exposed (*quae nudabat ira flagrantior*) to the Romans' swords and spears (16.12.49).<sup>39</sup> Ammianus deliberately contrasted the ordered Roman soldiers, fighting in well-disciplined manoeuvres, with the Alamanni, who left themselves unprotected due to their irrational excess of passion. The contrast here is specific, the Roman soldiers were compared to towers, standing fast and firm, who, with regard to their own safety and the safety of their comrades, protected themselves like murmillons, whereas the barbarians were raging without adequate safeguards. For that reason, the Alamanni were defeated through the well-coordinated attack of the Roman soldiers, who took strategic advantage of the enemy's unprotected sides.

The barbarians appeared to employ no consistent sense of formation, and the terminology that Ammianus made use of, such as *ardens* and *irrupit* — with images of heat and haste, something that would quickly burn itself out — was clearly indicative of this. The barbarians were easily dispensed of because they were not working in unison, and they did not cover each other with protective shields, but rather they behaved as individuals. Consequently, this lack of proper cohesion was useless against the Roman military machine. Moreover, as more and more of the

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<sup>38</sup> For a more recent examination into the Battle of Strasbourg and its beginnings with the usurpation of Magnentius and then Silvanus, see Burns (2003) 332ff. "In other words, the background to the battle of Strasbourg was one of a long series of Roman civil wars and their suppression," 334. Cf. Drinkwater (2007) 224ff.

<sup>39</sup> Cf. Catull. 68.139.

Alamanni were thrust upon the legionaries and lost their lives, the rest began to lose hope and their rage was overcome by fear (*pavore*). As a result, when such furious intensity exhibited in the form of battle rage was suddenly lost, all the Alamanni could do was run. As they fought as individuals, they also fled as individuals, caring about none but themselves. When the passion was lost, often the only emotion left is fear. This was especially evident in the fall of one of the strongest leaders of the Alamanni, Chonodomarius, who had confidently defeated Decentius and raged through Gaul, destroying many towns in his path. However, after the Battle of Strasbourg, he surrendered to Julian in fear, making himself a pitiful suppliant (16.12.3, 4, 5, 60, 65). When anger and indignation were spent, fear easily took hold and Chonodomarius was but one victim of it.<sup>40</sup>

### Barbarians and Romans

Ammianus recorded three instances of the anger of the barbarians which were caused by threats or frustration brought about by the Romans, and when we relate these back to the determinants of anger in the Introduction, these fit in with numbers 3 and 6, i.e. “a response to righteous indignation” and “a learnt response to certain situations.”

For example, Ammianus described the anger of the Limigantes, former slaves of the Sarmatians<sup>41</sup> who, in 358, became

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<sup>40</sup> Interestingly, at 19.11.15, Ammianus described a contrasting view of how some Roman soldiers were forced to leave parts of their bodies exposed due to the fury of the Limigantes’ attack (*furori resistentes hostili lateraque nudantes*). Cf. Cic. *Dom.* 91. Here the cohesion that the legionaries normally displayed was no match for the furious onslaught of the barbarians, who through sheer ferocity had broken through the Roman lines. The use of the word *furori* suggests a savage mentality that many of the Roman soldiers were unable to match in order to adequately defend themselves. For the savagery and madness of the barbarians, see Bitter (1976) 59ff. 76, 84; Seager (1986) 33ff., 54ff; Wiedemann (1986) 194ff.

<sup>41</sup> The Sarmatians themselves were also regarded by Ammianus (16.10.20) as, *latrocinandi peritissimum genus*. The Sarmatians were a people who originated from modern-day Iran and were settled in the empire as *laeti*, in return for military service, Mudd (1984) 105. On the fate of the

angry when Constantius wanted to force them to migrate to a distant territory. This was a carefully conceived plan, the purpose of which was that the emperor wanted to divert them from molesting the Roman provinces.<sup>42</sup> As a consequence of Roman intervention, the Limigantes were said to have thought of both entreaties and of battle, *sed fluctuantes ambiguitate mentium in diversa rapiiebantur, et furori mixta versutia* (17.13.7). This use of *furori* gave the audience a sense of madness mixed in with their anger, and thus the historian revealed that these were dangerous and untrustworthy people who behaved according to whatever fancy their desires took them. This communicated to the audience that the barbarians were controlled more by emotion than by reason, and as such could not be trusted. For example, during a ceremony in which Constantius had agreed to allow the Limigantes to become *laeti* in Roman territory, the barbarians unexpectedly attacked the emperor and almost killed him.<sup>43</sup> This led the Roman military to massacre the transgressors.<sup>44</sup>

A similar effort to control the activities of barbarians was attempted prior to this in 355, when war was declared on the Alamanni who had been making extensive inroads through the Roman frontier defences. The Alamanni attacked the Romans and Ammianus described the barbarians as running about, shouting threats and grinding their teeth (*frendendo*) (15.4.9). The barbarians' anger was caused by the declaration of war made against them by the Romans, which heightened their sense of indignation and acute feelings of betrayal. This relates to determinants of anger, "(2) a sense of betrayal, when there is an acute awareness of disappointment," and "(3) a response to righteous indignation" (see Introduction). The response they exhibited towards their enemy was said to be wild rage. This element, of savagery and

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Sarmatians, see Symmachus, *Relat.* 47. On the definition of 'slaves' in regards to the Limigantes, see Burns (2003) 345.

<sup>42</sup> For a more complete portrait of Constantius' military policy on the Rhine and Danube, see Seager (1999) 579–605. Cf. Drinkwater (1996) 20–30 for the exaggeration by the Roman government of the Germanic threat on the Rhine in order to justify its huge expenditure there.

<sup>43</sup> The *laeti* were only found in Gaul and Italy, and had existed in Gaul since the time of the Tetrarchy, Jones (1964) 620. Cf. Elton (1996) 129.

<sup>44</sup> Mudd (1984) 106. Cf. Seager (1999) 584.

madness, was key in Ammianus’ general descriptions of the reactions of the barbarians towards the Roman presence.

As we have seen, the causes of anger in barbarians were not as varied as one might initially think. Most of them were caused through feelings of insult and the desire to rectify wrongs done to them by the Romans. The main factor for both sides involved participation in military engagements with one another. This was a pertinent theme for Ammianus to convey in this period of barbarian unrest, as anger amongst military powers naturally led to armed conflicts. This study has produced interesting results, where the anger of the barbarians demonstrated that they were interested in some form of justice, including a sense of fairness and the belief in what rightly belonged to them. This goes against the traditional perceptions of mindless and heedless barbarian behaviour. Through their outrage we can clearly discern that the various groups were acting out of self-interest, which suggests that they were well aware of their position and awareness of space, and of the threat that the Romans presented to them. However, Ammianus’ portrayals still encompassed historiographic techniques, as well as his own personal beliefs, and so his descriptions of the barbarians were very much influenced by these factors.<sup>45</sup>

**PRIMARY RESPONSES TO ANGER IN BARBARIANS**

**Summary of Primary Responses**

MANIFESTATION OF ANGER	REFERENCE
“Battle rage”	16.12.44, 19.11.15, 31.10.5
Blazing eyes	31.13.10
Gnashing and grinding of the teeth	15.4.9, 16.12.36, 29.6.12
Raised voices/shouting	31.5.7
TOTAL 8	

Similar manifestations of anger were exhibited between the Roman soldiers and the barbarians. Ammianus used comparative terms to describe both the outward physical expressions of anger in the

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<sup>45</sup> Cf. Camus (1967) 116.

barbarian populations, as well as the inward. "Ammianus is fascinated by extreme behaviour of every kind and by responses to situations which are in themselves extreme. Such behaviour is often described in language which...signals an absence or loss of self-control."<sup>46</sup>

The language Ammianus employed was used to persuade and influence the audience into following the excess of rage the historian claimed was exhibited by the barbarians. This in turn would lead to an emotional reaction in the audience, who would oppose the irrationality of the barbarian mind. Ammianus' intention was to create a negative impression, whereas in the similar wording for the Roman soldiers, it was used positively. In this sense, "Ammianus' style is extremely rhetorical. Though sheer technique is often lacking, he aims, frequently with powerful effect, at a vivid narrative. Pathos is exploited — trembling virgins and desolate fathers are dragged lamenting into slavery by raging barbarians (e.g. 31.6.7–8)."<sup>47</sup> The motivation to create such emotional responses in the audience made his portrayals very much one-sided; such was his desire to create heroes and villains.

Ammianus' physical descriptions of the anger of the barbarians were, as stated above, reminiscent of those exhibited by the Roman soldiers. The Roman soldiers would gnash their teeth at being in the presence of the enemy (e.g. 16.12.13; 19.5.3; 27.10.7), and this was very much like the reaction from the barbarians. These descriptions gave an added physical element to the anger of the groups he was currently describing. In his descriptions of the barbarians, Ammianus also incorporated metaphors to describe their frenzied natures.<sup>48</sup> Momigliano supported the notion that Ammianus incorporated wild animal imagery to enhance his portrayals of the barbaric Germans, which he also applied to Christians and rebellious Roman troops.<sup>49</sup> The comparison to beasts would have appealed to the popular audience, who thrived on the *venationes* in the amphitheatres.<sup>50</sup> However, even though

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<sup>46</sup> Seager (1986) 43.

<sup>47</sup> Blockley (1980) xii.

<sup>48</sup> Cf. Camus (1967) 116f.

<sup>49</sup> 26.5.7, 31.8.9, 31.15.2, 22.5.4, 15.5.23, 28.6.4; Momigliano (1977) 134.

<sup>50</sup> MacMullen (1964) 444.



Ammianus regretted the dealings with the Alamanni and the incorporation of military commanders of Germanic origin, we cannot term the historian “anti-German.”<sup>51</sup>

The term *frendo* and its variations were used three times by Ammianus to describe the gnashing of teeth by the barbarians. Interestingly, and coincidentally, this is the same number as was exhibited by the Roman soldiers. In this respect *frendo* has no border and as such is a general term, for it was also used to describe the emperor Julian and the Persian soldiers. *Frendo* did not hold the same value as *ira* did, which, in the majority of instances, was used to describe Romans.

Another primary response that Ammianus wrote of was the loudness and no doubt unpleasant sound of the raised voices of the barbarian enemy. These noises perhaps sounded alien to the ears of this ‘cultivated’ soldier. Ammianus described the Alamanni’s war cries as *ululantes lugubre* (16.11.8); the Gauls’ voices were *metuendae voces complurium et minaces* (15.12.2),<sup>52</sup> and the Thuringi were *multa minabatur et saeva* (31.5.7). Even so, it was known that the Romans and barbarians both raised the war cry before battle commenced — the barbarian *baritus*. This was part of the psyching out of opponents, just as in later warfare artillery barrages were used as ‘harassing fire’.<sup>53</sup>

Ammianus seemed aware at all stages of the responses he would receive from his audience to the specific indications of anger he portrayed. As stated previously, *frendo* had an element of savagery attached to it, and when that savagery was directed towards the Romans this added a personal element that would have arouse feelings of indignation from his readers and listeners.

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<sup>51</sup> Sabbah (2003) 75.

<sup>52</sup> A generalisation.

<sup>53</sup> As Burns (1994) 5 pointed out, in the *Res Gestae* there were numerous instances of the merging of Roman and Germanic customs, and the *baritus* was one such instance. Cf. Burns (2003) 322. See especially Tacitus’ (*Germ.* 3) description of the Germanic *baritus*, *quem barditum vocant*. Cf. A.M. 26.7.17 where the Roman army hailed Procopius emperor and invoked Jupiter in their oath of loyalty to him, *quem barbari dicunt barritum*. However, one must be cautious in making immediate assumptions, see Nicasie (1998) 99f.

Ammianus described the barbarians' reactions towards the presence of the Roman soldiers, such as at 15.4.9, when the Alamanni, after having made extensive inroads through the Roman frontier defences, rushed about hither and thither in a disorganised fashion shouting boastful threats and gnashing their teeth, *strictis mucronibus discurrebant, frendendo minas tumidas intentantes*. This frenzied behaviour lacked the righteous indignation of the Roman soldiers who gnashed their teeth in defence of the empire, whereas the barbarians were threatening the very safety and security of the Romans through outrageous acts of defiance. In response to these incursions the legionaries attacked and put the Alamanni to flight. This time, it was their fear, rather than their rage, that caused the barbarians to leave their sides exposed, and consequently many were slain by Roman spears and swords.

The Battle of Strasbourg in 357 was an event fraught with the visual imagery of the savage and wild barbarian in opposition to the ordered discipline of the Roman soldier. The manifestations of the barbarians' anger were plain for all to see in the visual imagery the historian used to carefully describe each scene of his narrative of the battle. During this event, Ammianus (16.12.5) described the flight of the general Barbatio from the forces of the Alamanni, as having the effect of increasing, "the confidence and ferocity of the Germans."<sup>54</sup> This was contrasted by the stoicism of the Caesar Julian, who refused to bow before the enemy. When the Alamanni imperiously demanded that he depart from their territory, the young general, "showed neither anger nor distress" (16.12.3, *nec ira nec dolore percussus*). As Ammianus was clearly aware, fear exhibited by a leader in front of the enemy was not an option, for it made one vulnerable. The cowardice of Barbatio was something that the historian deeply deplored.

However, what Ammianus was unaware of, or else if he understood the rudiments, he refused to acknowledge them, was that fear is a survival response that prepares an individual's body for action. Barbatio may have been a "coward", but nevertheless was still subject to a human's natural survival instinct, which is to either fight in the face of danger, or flee. Barbatio apparently chose the latter, whether willingly or unwillingly. This "instinct" has been much studied by behaviourists since Darwin, and MRI studies

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<sup>54</sup> Blockley (1977) 219. On Barbatio, see also Seager (1999) 588.

show that fear does cause an individual's brain to activate a physical response in the body, thus preparing it for action.<sup>55</sup>

Further on, Ammianus described Chonodomarius, the fiery king of the Alamanni, who, brightly coloured, was larger than life (16.12.24). The visual imagery that Ammianus used to describe Chonodomarius was carefully worded so as to give maximum impact to the reader or listener's mind. The striking description demonstrated the incredible opposition that the Roman soldiers were up against, which was not the usual portrayal of the cowardly and disorderly barbarians. This presented to his audience the idea that Julian, Ammianus' hero in this campaign, was up against an adversary equal to that found in a Homeric tale. For Ammianus, this was a battle so important to him that he devoted much attention to the intricacies of it. The ferocity of the barbarians in this event has already been discussed in Chapter One, but it is worth recalling the descriptions the historian uses to emphasise the savagery of the Alamanni, whose primary response was to exhibit their rage for all to see. This was contrasted with the calmness of Julian and the ordered discipline of his gallant troops.<sup>56</sup>

Furthermore, Ammianus described the manifestations of the anger of the barbarians as accompanied with expressions of battle rage, and this was very much like the battle rage demonstrated by the Roman soldiers, which was also incited by their leaders. These physical signs of rage were intended to intimidate the Romans; however, it appears that the Roman soldiers were too well disciplined to easily lose their confidence.

At 16.12.36, during the Battle of Strasbourg, Ammianus wrote that the Roman soldiers were undeterred by the anger of the Alamanni. The barbarians were said to have rushed forward with "more haste than discretion." Ammianus used visual imagery to describe the enemy, "Their hair streamed behind them and a kind of madness flashed from their eyes" (*comae fluentes horrebant, et elucebat quidam ex oculis furor*).<sup>57</sup> The legionaries protected themselves

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<sup>55</sup> Gelder, *et al.* (2004) 16701–16706.

<sup>56</sup> Cf. Blockley (1977) 222.

<sup>57</sup> For more references, see Wiedemann (1986) 194. Tacitus also used visual imagery to heighten the fearsome appearance of the barbarians, with a great emphasis on the hairstyles of the Germans, e.g. *Germ.* 31, 38.

resolutely through controlling their own emotions. They also covered their bodies with a tight formation of shields and, as a cohesive entity, attacked the Alamanni, thus turning the barbarians' rage into fear (*perterrebat*) of imminent death. Though a mixture of fear, rage and the sheer desire to survive overcame all involved in the fighting, it was the resoluteness of the Roman soldiers and their commanding officers that led them to yet another victory against the barbarian enemy.

The next description of gnashing teeth comes much further on in the *Res Gestae*, at 29.6. This suggests that Ammianus was either unconcerned, or not in a position, to record these manifestations in the twelve books in-between. The historian described the anger of the Quadi against Aequitius, the commander of the cavalry in Illyricum, whom they accused of bringing about the destruction of their king. Ammianus (29.6.12) described their pursuit of Aequitius, "grinding their teeth and bent upon cutting his throat for this reason — that they believed that it was he who had brought their guiltless king to destruction" (*frendentes, hacque ex causa ingulo eius intenti, quod per ipsum circumventum regem existimabant insontem*). At once two legions were sent to subdue the Quadi, however the Sarmatians also became involved in this uprising, and almost destroyed these legions. In competing for honour and prestige, the Roman army had become divided through in-fighting. From these accounts it is apparent that the visible anger aroused in the barbarians was enough to push them far against the Romans, but it often led to disorder and individualism, which, when faced with a coordinated and disciplined army, often led to their defeat.

### The Battle of Adrianople<sup>58</sup>

The devastating consequences of outrage in barbarian groups are nowhere more apparent than in the events leading up to the Battle of Adrianople. In 376 the Tervingi had appealed to the emperor Valens to be allowed to settle in Thrace,<sup>59</sup> and in return they would provide troops for his army. For Ammianus, the decision to allow

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<sup>58</sup> For the impact of this battle on Roman battlefield superiority and the intelligence network that operated in relation to these events, see Austin & Rankow (1995) 241–243.

<sup>59</sup> The Tervingi were fleeing from the advance of the Huns and sought legal immigration (*receptio*), Hummer (1998) 15; Burns (2003) 328.

the Goths to serve as auxiliaries, “seemed matter for rejoicing rather than dread.” In 367 the Tervingi had sent a contingent of three thousand warriors to assist the usurper Procopius and in the same year Valens had sent a punitive campaign against them. Under their new leader Athanaric, the Tervingi withdrew, whilst the Romans devastated their lands before returning back across the Danube (27.5.4).<sup>60</sup>

Valens allowed the Goths into the ranks for purely economic reasons. These Goths would replace the recruits normally obtained from the provinces that would now instead provide gold. Valens could not see a problem in this strategy.<sup>61</sup> The Goths lived up to their side of the agreement and supplied the new recruits. Thousands of Tervingi settled in Thrace and most converted to Arianism. However, the governors of northern Thrace treated the new arrivals poorly, for it proved a near impossible task to feed them all. It was even said that the officials offered the Goths scrawny dogs as food in return for slaves (31.4.10–11). This unfair treatment eventually proved intolerable to the Goths, and for these and other reasons, over a period of more than twenty-two months, finally led to a large-scale rebellion.

Valens was forced to react and without waiting for his nephew Gratian and his army to reach them from the west, and against the advice of a group of his senior officers, Valens formed his forces against the Goths. However, on the afternoon of 9 August 378, the combined armies of the Goths defeated and killed the 15–20,000 Roman soldiers Valens led against them, including Valens himself.<sup>62</sup> Ammianus described the accompanying visual imagery, as the primary responses to anger were extremely emotive in his description, and thus he wrote of the Goths (31.13.10) that, “their eyes blazed with fury” (*furor ex oculis lucente barbari*).<sup>63</sup> The fatal decision of Valens to rush into this battle was said to have been

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<sup>60</sup> Treadgold (1997) 66; Curta (2005) 180; Socrates, *Hist. Eccl.* 4.34.

<sup>61</sup> Cf. Cameron (1993) 147 for this “short-sighted policy.”

<sup>62</sup> Cameron (1993) 137. The number was closer to 25,000 according to Treadgold (1997) 67. The total influx of Goths from beyond the Danube was something along the lines of 60–75,000, including women and children, Burns (1994) 30.

<sup>63</sup> Cf. 16.12.36.

prompted by another group of his advisers, who knew how to incite the emperor's temper. They warned him not to wait for support from Gratian, as the young emperor would share in Valens' victory (31.12.7). Possibly incited by anger and the thrills of victory, Valens went into battle against a much larger and far fiercer enemy. As has been pointed out, the psychological motives behind Valens' actions are difficult to prove, but it does appear that Valens was irritated by accounts of the successes of his general Sebastianus and Gratian's successes in the West. Thus, "In the atmosphere of crisis surrounding the Adrianople campaign, such reports were a stimulant."<sup>64</sup> His loss was perhaps inevitable, for it would have been remarkable for any Roman force to defeat such a large, though undisciplined, hoard. The Goths were fighting against injustice, as well as for their very livelihood. When the Ostrogothic cavalry joined the fighting in the afternoon, Valens' cause was lost.

Indeed, a similar story was told by Xenophon, who described a scene in which a general leads his troops against a city in a fit of rage, as a consequence he was killed and his men were slaughtered. Xenophon moralised that masters ought not to punish even slaves in their anger, and in doing so they frequently suffered more harm than they inflicted, "To attack opponents in anger and without intelligence is a complete mistake, for anger is without forethought, but intelligence looks as much to avoiding harm to oneself as to doing harm to one's enemies" (*Hell.* 5.3.5–6; 5.3.7). Unfortunately for Valens, his participation in this battle led to his death. Commentators can today see that he followed his emotions, as well as the desire to advance his own prestige (as well as the advice given by some of his advisors), rather than reason to focus and restrain his actions, this has been a fault of many unsuccessful commanders.<sup>65</sup>

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<sup>64</sup> Austin & Rankow (1995) 242. See Newbold (1990) 261, who saw envy of the exploits of Gratian as the motivating factor behind Valens' engagement of the Goths.

<sup>65</sup> After the defeat, orders went out to the eastern commanders to ensure a purge of Goths in the Roman army, 31.16.8; Zos. 4.26.

## SECONDARY RESPONSES TO ANGER IN BARBARIANS

### Summary of Secondary Responses

SECONDARY RESPONSE	REFERENCE
Angry threats	16.12.34
Increasing numbers prior to an attack	31.5.7
Invading enemy territory/destruction of property and civilians	29.6.6, 29.6.12, 31.5.5, 31.10.5
The attempts to check the progress of/or to attack the enemy	14.2.14, 15.4.9, 16.12.36, 16.12.44, 16.12.46, 16.12.49, 17.13.7, 19.11.15, 31.5.5, 31.13.10
The killing of the enemy	28.5.13, 31.5.5
<b>TOTAL 18</b>	

### Barbarian Responses to the Presence of the Enemy

One immediately notices from the table above that the foremost response to anger by the barbarians was the desire to check the progress of, or to attack the enemy — who were naturally the Romans. As we saw in Chapter One, this was an aggressive response similarly exhibited by the Roman soldiers, who were trained to react aggressively towards the barbarians. This response on behalf of the barbarians was apparent in 14.2 of the *Res Gestae*, where Ammianus narrated a long and often awkward account of the incursions of the Isaurians, a group of barbarians who were frustrated with the attempts of the Romans to stop their movements into Roman held areas, especially their plundering of ports and towns.<sup>66</sup> The historian did not hesitate to incorporate descriptions of these bandits' wildness, for they became *rabie saeviore amplificatis viribus* (14.2.14), and *flagrans vesania* (14.2.15). For the benefit of the reader they were compared to wild animals (*bestiae monitae*), which, when encouraged by hunger, returned to the

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<sup>66</sup> For the outrage of the Isaurians, see Honey (2006) 47–55.

place where they were once fed (14.2.2).<sup>67</sup> The Isaurians in the *Res Gestae* were presented as a somewhat minor threat to the Romans, and only once does the historian make a specific reference to their anger at the presence of Romans in fortresses in Isauria. Instead, he used adjectival clauses to suggest their savageness and, as such, their implied anger. The angry response of the Isaurians to the Roman occupation was their unsuccessful attempt to attack Seleucia, where Roman soldiers were stationed. Ammianus ended his account with the report that fear of the Romans caused these barbarians to take to the trackless mountains where they remained obscure.

In Ammianus' extant narrative, the group which remained a consistent threat to the Romans was the Alamanni, the Germanic tribesmen who perpetually threatened the provincial borders. These were the barbarians whom Constantius sent Julian to subdue through the use of his Gallic legions. Throughout the *Res Gestae*, it was a predictable response of the Alamanni to react to the threats posed by the Romans through attacking their legions, and, as stated above, this was not always unjustified on their part. At 15.4.9 Ammianus gave an adequate reason as to why the Romans had declared war on all the Alamannic peoples, for they had been making incursions through the Roman frontier defences and had set up an ambush against a section of the Roman army. On their part, the Alamanni believed that it was the Romans who were invading their territory, and they responded to the Roman threat by attacking them. As we have already seen, their angry responses were manifested through the grinding and gnashing of their teeth, "they ran hither and thither with drawn swords, grinding their teeth and shouting boastful threats" (*strictis mucronibus discurrabant, frendendo minas tumidas intentantes*) — a visible response meant to intimidate their enemy.

The next series of events that Ammianus described in relation to the Alamanni were collected together under the title of the Battle of Strasbourg. This was a battle which was so significant that the historian deemed it necessary to devote a great deal of space

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<sup>67</sup> Ammianus used similar wild animal imagery when writing of the Germans at 16.5.17, and the Goths at 31.15.2.



and interest to it.<sup>68</sup> Ammianus applied much rhetoricising language to his characterisations of the two opposing sides, and, as with his description of Chonodomarius, he was very fond of incorporating visual imagery to enhance the emotional depth of his carefully constructed portrayals. In this way, visual imagery was used to enhance the historian's descriptions of the secondary responses of the barbarians, especially in their response to the presence of the Roman army. At 16.12.51, Ammianus transmitted the idea of collective rage, which united the barbarians. However, no doubt due to their different leadership and discipline, they appeared to lose order, and the Alamanni, instead of fighting as a combined force, soon fled from disaster when the Roman lines proved too strong. When dealing with the Germans, Goths or Huns, there were a frequent number of incidents in which the response to the threat of the Romans was to attack their enemy. In this way the barbarians sought to assert their own sense of balance in a situation that for so long had been tipped towards the Romans, but during this period was becoming more and more dominated by barbarian victories.

### **Anger and Barbarian Violence**

Ammianus recorded many examples of the secondary responses to anger that the barbarians exhibited and enacted out, often as a result of their perceptions of outrage towards the Romans. In their discernment of exceedingly unjust situations, the outrage felt by the barbarians far outweighed that exhibited by the Roman soldiers. Interestingly, the historian often presented these with a fair amount of impartiality, perhaps because this outrage appeared justified to him, for by acknowledging that they were the ones who had been dealt an injustice, the barbarians were merited in attacking the Romans.

At 29.6.6, Ammianus recorded the secondary responses to outrage which the Quadi felt towards the Romans, having learnt that their king had been killed. Once their fury (*efferavit*) was in full swing, it helped to mask their grief and sadness. They then

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<sup>68</sup> Even though his descriptions lacked in technical details, he more than made up for this in his description of sieges. Cf. Naudé (1958) 92–105.

funnelled this emotional response into something destructive and devastating for territories under the control of the Romans. Outrage often led to acts of violence. These barbarian groups tended to feel as though they were victims, and sought to take revenge in some form or other. As shown above, the Quadi, outraged at the death of their king Gabinius and the escape of Sextus Claudius Petronius Probus,<sup>69</sup> whom they blamed for his death, responded through violent means. They killed many innocent people and looted and plundered areas across the Danube. In their fury, the Quadi no longer cared about agreements made to protect these regions. They felt that the Romans had betrayed them, and consequently treaties no longer mattered (29.6.6ff). This then relates to determinant of anger number 2, “a sense of betrayal, when there is an acute awareness of disappointment.”

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At 31.10.5, Ammianus described the state of the German forces who were grouped against the Romans. For this scene, Hamilton translated *exarsere flagrantius* as “war-fever,” whereas Rolfe translated it as “hotter rage.” The term war-fever seems a truer representation of the battle rage that the German forces were feeling. Ammianus gave this scene a sense of fieriness and passion which he often associated with those about to join battle, as the troops were incited to greater deeds by their leaders. Ammianus also let his audience know that the anger of the Germans gave rise to, “a mood of sublime confidence.” As discussed earlier, anger helped to drive out fear and encouraged the collective group to fight harder against an enemy whom they believed they had no further reason to fear. The response here then was the gathering of a large force, and safety in numbers was also a way of reinforcing confidence in individuals, for, when they were part of a large collective, they were able to do things which were unthinkable when numbers were few. The response was ineffective, however,

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<sup>69</sup> For the case of Petronius Probus, see Cameron (1985) 164–182. A Roman aristocrat, wealthy, powerful and well connected. He was prefect of Illyricum 364, Gaul 366, Italy 368–375 and 383. Ammianus suggested that Probus’ long list of praetorian prefectures were exploited by him to add to his vast wealth, 27.11.

for Gratian and his advisers were able to threaten the Lentienses with an unrelenting pursuit, forcing them to surrender. Ammianus stated (31.10.18) that this success against the Lentienses crippled the western tribes, something that even Julian had not been able to accomplish.

**CONSEQUENCES OF ANGER AND BARBARIANS**

**Summary of Consequences for Selves or Others**

CONSEQUENCE FOR SELVES	REFERENCE
Defeat of the barbarians	15.4.9, 16.12.49, 17.13.7, 19.11.15, 31.10.5
Loss of order	16.12.44
CONSEQUENCE FOR OTHERS	REFERENCE
Attacking the enemy/Killing of the enemy	16.12.36, 16.12.46, 17.13.7, 19.11.15, 31.5.5, 31.13.10
Destruction of civilians and property/Invading territory	28.6.4, 29.6.12, 31.10.5
TOTAL 15	

Ammianus presented a bleak picture of the consequences of anger for the barbarians, especially when compared with the same category in Chapter One. In Chapter One it was revealed that the Roman military was often victorious over the barbarians, and in part this was achieved through manifestations of anger. However, in contrast, Ammianus recorded very few victories for the barbarians, especially as his main priority was to narrate their battles against the Romans. And, when they were triumphant in battle, often there was a heavy price to pay for their successes.

**The Destructive Consequences of Barbarian Anger**

At 28.6.4, Ammianus recorded the terrifying consequence of the anger of the Austoriani, whose response to the death of a man, whom they claimed as their own, was the wilful and deliberate destruction of innocent people and their property. Again, Ammianus used wild animal imagery (*ferarum similes rabie*) to give emphasis to the dehumanisation of these barbarian tribesmen, and here rhetorical elements came into play. His audience was given

visual imagery of the mindless and uncivilised behaviour of the barbarians, as they wantonly slaughtered those who were undefended. This was similar to his description of the Huns at 31.2.2, for he stated that, “they have squat bodies, strong limbs, and thick necks, and are so prodigiously ugly and bent that they might be two-legged animals, or the figures crudely carved from stumps which are seen on the parapets of bridges” (*prodigiose deformes et pandi, ut bipeds existimes bestias vel quales in commarginandes pontibus effigiati stipites dolantur incompte*).

Nevertheless, what Ammianus failed to point out, was that the barbarians were behaving as they were naturally inclined to behave due to their feelings of moral outrage. For as modern behaviourists point out, individuals feel moral outrage when it is necessary to reproach others who are blamed for the existence of a perceived injustice or who are held responsible for (re-)establishing justice.<sup>70</sup> Clearly the Austoriani felt this way, and the only way that they had for righting this injustice was through a physical display of aggression.

That Ammianus wanted to arouse an indignant response from his audience was also apparent at 28.6.4, when he spoke of the councillor Silva — a very Roman name<sup>71</sup> — being taken unjustly from his home. This was met with evident disapproval from the extremely judgemental historian. Here Ammianus portrayed the traditional perception that the barbarians, in their wildness, threatened the ordered Roman mind. What this episode presented was an act of retribution, something that the Romans themselves had at times committed. It was not killing for the sake of killing, but a purposeful response to a perceived affront. In this period such a reaction was not unusual, nor unwarranted.

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It was mentioned above that Ammianus presented his audience with a very bleak picture of the outcomes, especially in battle, for the barbarians when in opposition to the Romans. Ammianus was a strong adherent to Roman principles and portrayed events for *gloria* and *virtus* in the ancient Roman tradition. The historian

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<sup>70</sup> Montada & Schneider (1989) 316.

<sup>71</sup> For the argument that a respectable Roman name might hide a somewhat Romanised barbarian, see Nicasie (1998) 98.

provided his readers with five specific examples involving anger that affected the defeats of the barbarians at the hands of the Romans, which in comparison to the Romans' one, is in stark contrast. We do not have an account of the Roman military losing their sense of discipline and fighting without order which was connected to a term or phrase indicating anger. To lose control, as a result of emotion, was a sign of barbarity, something that the Roman commanding officers tried their hardest to avoid, although it did occur on occasion, and there were many barbarians within the military.

However, Ammianus was not always the best authority when he presented his subject material, and he incorporated details which were often not purely factual, but important for the purposes of historiography. For example, he wrote of the Huns (31.2.7) that, "they are not subject to the authority of any king, but break through any obstacle in their path under the improvised command of their chief men" (*nulla severitate regali, sed tumultuario primatum ductu contenti perumpunt*). What this perhaps revealed was that, "Ammianus did not understand how the type of tactics he was describing could be consistent with a chain of command as he understood it."<sup>72</sup> This deficiency was then reflected in his portrayals. However, the alternative is that Ammianus deliberately distorted his descriptions in order to present a more positive representation of the victories for the Romans. Due to the incessant warfare and the rise of usurpers, it can be said that the empire during certain periods of the fourth century was in crisis. It was therefore satisfying for the Romans to hear of the defeats of the barbarian tribesmen, who were constantly threatening their borders. This persistent pressure contributed to the climate of fear that seemed to permeate this period. Ammianus was able to reassure his audience that the Romans were frequently successful.

The table above reveals that the audacity of the barbarians led them to suffer five major defeats, which were recorded by the historian for their relevance to posterity. He even gave us the dramatic finality of the battle against the Lentienses in all its graphic details, with bodies still mounted on dead horses, and the living fighting above the dead (15.4.12). In these types of

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<sup>72</sup> King (1987) 82.

descriptions, Ammianus used all his powers of rhetoric to emphasise the conquest of the victorious Roman military over the slain bodies of their enemies. For this he would often have had to rely on eyewitness testimony, as well as accounts which were sent back to imperial headquarters, even though many of these were uniform and traditional and fit into a stereotype which could be elaborated upon without any testimonial.

### **The Consequences of Barbarian Anger against an Enemy**

When Julian defeated the Alamanni famously at the Battle of Strasbourg in 357, Ammianus did not hold back in his demonising of the barbarians, and his descriptions took them from the world of man into that of the mythical, possessed by a raving madness. The fury of the Germans was so overwhelming that the Romans were forced to fight hotly for their very lives. The Romans tried to encourage fear (*perterrebat*) in their enemy; however, this rebounded upon them as the Alamanni put even the cavalry to flight. The consequence of the Alamanni's fury here was to force the Romans to defend themselves even more hotly, which led to further casualties on both sides. The Romans were better equipped and disciplined, yet the Germans had the force of fury and the notion of defending their lands on their side. Ammianus described them with all the passion he could muster, for here they were stronger than ever before in Julian's encounters with them (16.12.36). Then, further on into this battle Ammianus recorded at 16.12.46 that the Alamanni were like inspired madmen (*furoris affectu*), determined to destroy all before them, and again we are given the sense that the Alamanni were inhuman and all the Romans could do to save their skins was to fight bravely against all the odds.

The description of the destruction of the Alamanni at the Battle of Strasbourg ended finally and brutally, as the soldiers took revenge on the previously furious barbarians, who now had lost all hope and were fleeing by any means possible. With full satisfaction, Ammianus incorporated descriptions of the enemy plunging into the river where the weight of their arms made them sink to its depths. The historian seemed to relish this in his description at 16.12.57, as he compared the sight of the dying barbarians to a scene from a stage show, "When the curtain reveals some wonderful spectacle" (*et velut in quodam theatriali spectaculo, aulaeis miranda monstrantibus multa*).

How different then was the outcome of the defeat of the Lentienses that Ammianus described at 31.10.17, where there was no slaughter of the defeated enemy, but a peaceful outcome, where young men were sent to serve in the Roman army. This did not reflect negatively in either his portrayals of the bravery of the Roman military or the leadership qualities of the Emperor Gratian. A successful outcome — bloody or not — for the Romans, was what defined the greatness of the Roman military overall, even when the victories occurred for Constantius or Valentinian. As long as it was victory for the Romans against an outside enemy, it was worthy of praise from our historian.

**COMMENTS BY AMMIANUS**

**Summary of the Comments by Ammianus**

COMMENT	REFERENCE
Ammianus comments on the death of other victims	29.6.6
Ammianus comments on the death of Roman soldiers	19.11.15
Ammianus describes the behaviour of the barbarians	17.13.7
Ammianus describes the ferocity of the barbarians	16.12.36
TOTAL 4	

Few comments were made by Ammianus in regards to the anger of the barbarians. As with his comments regarding the Roman military, these were infrequent and reserved only for the most important occasions, or when they best suited his subject and the nature of his portrayal. It was often with great subtlety that he related his own emotional reaction towards different events. Therefore, we need to delve deeply into his language to unearth what he was specifically implying, something that is extremely hard due to the nature of his writing, although not perhaps as hard as Tacitus, who was even less likely to reveal his personal feelings.

### Barbarian Ferocity

As discussed above, at 16.12.47, the historian made a comparison between the Roman military and the Alamanni, which reflected the common belief the Romans held of their Germanic enemies. In this presentation we have the distancing of the Romans from their adversaries, which was so often incorporated into the literature. This was Ammianus' comment on the civilised Romans, carrying with them all the language and culture of their heritage, as opposed to the barbarians, who incorporated all that he considered bad about these indigenous groups, including their untamed natures.

Earlier on, at 16.12.36, Ammianus discussed the vision of ferocity that the Alamanni presented to the opposing Roman forces without the inclusion of a reference to the Roman military to counterbalance it, "Their hair streamed behind them and a kind of madness flashed from their eyes" (*comae fluentes horrebant, et elucebat quidam ex oculis furor*). Undeniably, this imagery was so cleverly inserted into the text that it was just as effectual as the later description. Ammianus was not present at this battle, yet his descriptions took his audience there. The barbarians that Ammianus presented his audience with were fearsome, and yet Julian was able to overcome the Alamanni at this decisive battle. In the end, Julian was a hero and, more importantly, Roman bravery and discipline once again overcome barbarity.

### Barbarian Behaviour

As revealed earlier, Ammianus made a comment on the behaviour of the Limigantes, former slaves of the Sarmatians. At 17.13.7 the historian wrote that these peoples advanced on the Romans, and "With mingled craft and fury they thought both of entreaties and of battle" (*sed fluctuantes ambiguitate mentium in diversa rapiabantur, et furori mixta versutia*). Ammianus revealed here that typical barbarian trait of deception and dishonesty. He disapproved of these imputed actions for they were underhand and unethical, and this anti-barbarian prejudice represented the natural mistrust that the Romans had for outsiders. At all stages, the Limigantes lacked the virtues that the Romans stood for. They were unworthy of being associated with the Sarmatians and came under Roman subjugation.



**Barbarians and the Death of Roman Soldiers**

Ammianus recorded the death of Roman soldiers at 19.11.15, and of Gabinius, the king of the Quadi, at 29.6.6. In both instances we are given the clear impression of his condemnation of these occurrences. Thus of the former he wrote, “...or had met their appointed end because in their efforts to resist the fury of the enemy they left their sides exposed” (*aut furori resistentes hostili, lateraque nudantes intacta, ordo fatalis obsumpsit*). Here we are given the impression that the Romans were faced with the irrepressible fury of the barbarians. In fact, the strength and violent natures of these groups in the western half of the empire would eventually prove too much for the Romans, and here we have a precursor to the changes that Ammianus would not witness. The historian also made the explicit comment that the killing of Gabinius was an “outrage” (*atrociis*), although he understood, even if he did not support, the Quadi’s furious reaction to this deed.<sup>73</sup>

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The fact that we are only provided with five comments of this nature reveals that not all events can necessarily bring forth such a personal response from the historian. It was only when he felt strongly that a deed was committed without *honos* or *virtus*, either on the Roman or the barbarian side, then it deserved some comment.<sup>74</sup>

**PERSIANS**

**Summary of the Causes of Anger for the Persians**

CAUSE OF ANGER	REFERENCE
Notions of outrage at an insult, disrespect or injustice	19.6.8, 19.6.13, 19.7.1, 25.8.17
TOTAL 4	

For the Romans, the Persians represented their greatest threat and adversary. Both empires were world dominators; however, due to threats from other sectors, these two super-powers, up until

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<sup>73</sup> Cf. Sabbah (2003) 74.

<sup>74</sup> Cf. Blockley (1988) 249.

Ammianus' time, had never defeated the other. The (Eastern) Romans defeated the Persians, but only in the 7th century (Heraclius), shortly after they were defeated themselves by the Arabs. Thus to Ammianus' perspective, neither power was able to dominate the other. Their vast borders meant that they could never withdraw completely from each other and their cultural differences meant that total integration was extremely difficult. Bullough even goes so far to say that the pressures from "uncivilised hordes" helped stabilise, "the peace which was established in 363 AD lasted for almost a century and a half, until 502 AD."<sup>75</sup> Thus, the 'shameful' treaty that Jovian made with Sapor did, in fact, lead to a lengthy period of peace that was beneficial for both empires, no matter Ammianus' own opinion of this deal (25.7.13). Under the Sassanid dynasty, until the seventh century, Persia remained the chief eastern power, and it was recognised as an equal to the Roman Empire;<sup>76</sup> whereas the Parthians, who played a significant role in Tacitus' work, were considered in the Roman tradition to be barbarians, although the actual term was not applied.<sup>77</sup> Ammianus, following literary convention, never once referred to the Parthians using this term, although he did mention that they were of Scythian origin (31.2.20), which conveyed a negative connotation.<sup>78</sup> This may in part reveal why Ammianus' portrayal of Julian as taking on such a super power in his Persian campaign and the impossibility of the mission, coupled with the huge resources it would entail, was met with few supportive comments from the historian.<sup>79</sup>

We have limited recorded knowledge concerning Persian attitudes towards the Romans.<sup>80</sup> The fact that Ammianus did record the Persian perspective from his own personal point of view therefore proves valuable (if somewhat distorted). This assumption

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<sup>75</sup> Bullough (1963) 57, 55.

<sup>76</sup> According to Ammianus 27.4–6 and Herodian, *History* 4.2.2, the Sassanians made every effort to revive the Achaemenid Empire and revive the old imperial Persian borders. See Daryaei (2005) 128.

<sup>77</sup> This was due to Roman ignorance. See Drijvers (1999) 200–201.

<sup>78</sup> See also Laistner (1971) 145.

<sup>79</sup> Indeed the entire enterprise was doomed to failure and Sapor at all stages shone through.

<sup>80</sup> As with accounts of the Parthians, the literary evidence comes entirely from the Roman point of view, Goldsworthy (1998) 61.

about Persian views comes out in Julian's panegyric to Constantius II (*Or.* 1.27 A-B),<sup>81</sup> in which he stated that during the reigns of Constantine and Constantius II, the Persians planned to conquer the whole of Syria and settle their own people in the cities. However, we do have a real account of Persian interests in the letter written by Sapor to Constantius II, demanding all the ancestral lands as far as the Strymon and the boundary of Macedonia (17.5.5–6). The anger against Constantius II for refusing to grant his request was apparent, and led Sapor to invade Mesopotamia in retribution.<sup>82</sup>

Above, we have seen how wild and unruly the barbarians were, as presented by Ammianus in his narrative. Wild animal imagery pervaded his account and led his audience to compare the Germans, Goths and other barbarian groups to wild beasts, an effective means of dehumanising and debasing these groups. However, this was something that he never did in his descriptions of the Persians.<sup>83</sup> Instead, Ammianus referred to the Persians as of the most deceitful of all peoples (*fallacissimae gentis*, 21.13.4), who had abandoned their previous policy, "of hand-to-hand fighting for one of theft and robbery" (16.9.1). When Julian (23.5.21) addressed his troops he told them that he feared nothing except, "the trickery and guile of our wily foe" (*nihil enim praeter dolos et insidias hostium vereor, nimium callidorum*). Ammianus followed the general rule of associating Persians with the making of falsehoods, (which, incidentally, was infuriating to the Romans) and this was a typical representation of this people throughout Roman history.<sup>84</sup> The historian was unable to associate the Persians with the same lack of cultural sophistication and organised government that he was able to direct towards the barbarian groups, and his terminology was necessarily adjusted to fit in with these better disciplined and advanced (at least in the upper classes) people.<sup>85</sup>

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<sup>81</sup> On Constantius and Persia, 337–350; see *CAHP* 13, 11–14.

<sup>82</sup> Isaac (1992) 23.

<sup>83</sup> Cf. Blockley (1977) 231.

<sup>84</sup> Wiedemann (1986) 195.

<sup>85</sup> General stereotypes on the Persians and western barbarians were covered in the model of Dobesch (1995) 16–21, distinguishing: Greco-

Ammianus described the Persians' own opposition towards similar groups of wild barbarians that the Romans themselves were forced to deal with. At 14.3.1, Ammianus wrote that Sapor was compelled to drive back from his borders a number of very wild tribes (*ferocissimas gentes*), who often made raids upon his territory. These types of incursions were something that the Romans also frequently had to deal with. At 18.4.1, the historian again wrote that Sapor had been forced to subdue the savage tribes (*ferarum gentium*),<sup>86</sup> which he then armed against the Romans. The Persian king was then described as burning (*flagrans*) to destroy the might of the Romans and secure for himself an increase in territory — as well as the defeat of their most powerful foe.

As we have seen, in late antiquity, the Romans treated the Persians as a separate people from other cultural groups and political entities, for they were infrequently referred to with barbarian imagery. Further evidence of the separation between Persians and barbarians were the anger terms applied, for the barbarians exhibited *furor* and *rabies*, whereas the Persians displayed more 'civilised' emotions, such as *ira* and *indignatio*. Although, thus saying, Ammianus did use the term *ira* to refer to barbarians three times, and this was because *ira* was such a strong term for anger that it suited the presentation of this emotion when it was shown for an honourable reason.<sup>87</sup>

Here, however, it is necessary to take a different view to T.E.J. Wiedemann, who claimed that Ammianus used *furor* or *ira* to only describe qualities in people whom he disliked.<sup>88</sup> As we have seen in Chapter One, the historian used the term *ira* and its forms fourteen times to describe the anger of the Roman military.<sup>89</sup> For the majority of instances, *ira militum* was something that the historian almost always wholeheartedly supported. The evidence here presented cannot support Wiedemann's argument. Even when looking at emperors, it was Julian, Ammianus' hero, who was

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Romans, "civilised barbarians" of the East, "semi-barbarians" of Europe and "wild barbarians."

<sup>86</sup> The Chionitae and Gelani.

<sup>87</sup> At 16.12.49, 14.2.17 & 16.12.44.

<sup>88</sup> Wiedemann (1986) 196.

<sup>89</sup> At 17.13.15, 20.4.16, 16.12.52, 17.10.6, 17.13.9, 22.3.8, 24.2.5, 24.4.20, 25.3.10, 25.7.4, 19.5.8, 19.11.14, 25.3.6 & 26.9.3.

described as exhibiting *ira* far more than his fellow rulers.<sup>90</sup> And again, the historian was often sympathetic to this anger for it was frequently shown in a positive light by a man whom he often supported. *Furor*, on the other hand, was used to describe those whom Ammianus sought to denigrate, and here, Wiedemann was correct.

However, returning to *ira* and Ammianus' incorporation of the term in relation to the Persians, the historian wrote at 20.7.15 of the Persians that the swords of the infuriated enemy (*iratorum hostium*) cut down all that they could find. The Persian forces had been fired with pent up frustration during their time trying to take the fortress of Bezabde in Mesopotamia in 360.<sup>91</sup> Once they had penetrated its defences, the consequence for the inhabitants was general slaughter, without regard to age or gender.

What this episode reveals is not aggression simply for the sake of relieving frustration, but is rather in agreement with the view of psychologists, that aggression can be a learned instrumental behaviour. The Persians attacked the inhabitants of Bezabde with such force, not because they had been thwarted in the past, but because they believed that this action would bring them some other benefits, such as rewards from their leaders.<sup>92</sup>

The next use of *ira* in regards to the Persians was used by Ammianus when he wrote of their anger towards the Romans who were present in lands that they regarded as their own (25.8.17). In 363, after the death of Julian, Jovian led the Roman forces back towards Roman held provinces. At 25.7.1–3 Sapor refused to take advantage of the abject state of the Roman forces and was in fact concerned by the large army and his own losses.<sup>93</sup> Jovian was aware of the anger of the Persians towards their presence there, and he refused to spend the night inside the walls of Nisibis (Mesopotamia), for the shame it would cause if, whilst he was there, it should be handed over to the infuriated enemy (25.8.17), “It put him to the blush that an impregnable city should be handed over to an angry foe while he was within its walls” (*rubescens agente se*

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<sup>90</sup> At 22.13.2, 16.4.2, 16.12.3, 22.14.2, 23.2.4, 24.3.2, 24.5.7 & 24.5.10.

<sup>91</sup> Cf. Seager (1997) 258.

<sup>92</sup> Berkowitz (1989) 62.

<sup>93</sup> Boeft (2005) 219.

*intra muros, urbem inexpugnabilem iratis hostibus tradī*).<sup>94</sup> The two uses of *ira* both suggest notions of outrage, the first towards those who caused the Persians such frustration by refusing the requests of Sapor to surrender, the second towards those who were present on their lands, and whose purpose, initially, had been to attack and defeat them.

Next, there were manifestations of anger which the Persians exhibited, as a primary response to their feelings of rage. As we have seen in Ammianus' descriptions of the barbarians, twice they manifested their rage through raising their voices and shouting. The first of these instances occurred during the siege of Amida in Mesopotamia in 359, after the Gallic troops made a successful sally upon the unsuspecting Persians. When they observed their dead the next day and found *grandees* and *satraps* amongst them (19.6.13), "There was general mourning, and angry complaints were heard among the kings at the thought that the Romans had penetrated their outposts before the walls" (*luctus ubique et indignatio regum audiebatur, arbitrantium per stationes muris obiectas irrupisse Romanos*).<sup>95</sup>

The next instance in which the Persians exhibited their anger through raised voices was at Bezabde, discussed above (20.7.5). Their rage was visible and audible to those who held the fortress, as they communicated loudly their threats against the besieged, *acriter minans ac fremens*. We know from the discussion above that the Persians were feeling extremely frustrated with the inhabitants, and as well, they were being incited to anger by Sapor, who was also raging. As with Ammianus' use of *ira* to describe the anger of the Persians along with their notions of outrage, here too, with these manifestations of their anger, it was coupled with acts that they could conceivably believe were outrageous and unjustified. This then relates to determinants of anger "(3) a response to righteous indignation..." and "(6) a learnt response to certain situations." They interpreted the surprise attack on them at Amida as a personal injury that assaulted their very notions of security and

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<sup>94</sup> The important fortress of Nisibis had been handed over to the Romans by the Persians during a settlement in 299, which Diocletian and Galerius had decreed of king Nerseh, Blockley (1989) 469. See also Isaac (1992) 23; Potter (2004) 467f; 472.

<sup>95</sup> Cf. Livy 25.1.9.

how they believed the enemy should be constrained. At Bezabde, the enemy did not behave as the Persians wished them to behave, and thus their emotive response was physical violence. To defend one's life against a threat was a natural response, and the indignation felt must have helped them to collectively fight off their attackers. The historian, who was present at this event, was able to record (though he did not provide specific numbers) that there were high losses on both sides. This occurred both during the siege of Amida and the assault upon Bezabde, during which rage prompted the Persians to attack their enemy, and sometimes those who were innocent, without mercy.

Ammianus' comments on these matters were, as usual, very limited. Only twice does he give specific comments in regards to the anger of the Persians. The first instance occurred when the historian wrote that during the Persians' assault on Bezabde (20.7.15), "No one cared what he did, but in the midst of these atrocities the greed for loot proved stronger in that people even than the lust for blood" (*nullo, quid ageret, respectante. Inter quae tam funesta gens rapiendi cupidior*). The next occurrence was when Jovian declined the invitation to stay at Nisibis. Ammianus wrote (25.8.17) that he refused, "from shame that during his own stay within its walls the impregnable city should be handed over to the enemy" (*erubescens agente se intra muros, urbem inexpugnabilem iratis hostibus tradi*). These remarks suggest that the Persians' conduct was clearly, at these points, too violent and uncontrollable in the mind of Ammianus for him to find anything worthy in their performance, and his language revealed a hostile narrative of their behaviour. In this respect, "Although *erubescens* denotes the feeling of Jovian, the opinion is unmistakably that of the author himself, with his insistence of the shameful submission to Sapor."<sup>96</sup>

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<sup>96</sup> Boeft (2005) 276. Cf. Eutropius 10.17, who wrote that the peace "...would not have been altogether reprehensible, if (Jovian) had been resolved, when it should be in his power to throw off the obligation of the treaty...But being in dread, as long as he remained in the east, of a rival for the imperial dignity, he thought too little of his glory..." For positive representations of this peace and of Jovian himself, see Socrates, *Hist. Eccl.* 3.19; John of Nicias 81.20.

The Persians did not suffer from the same criticisms of uncivilised behaviour as the barbarians did. However, they were notorious for other types of misconduct, which were equally despised by Ammianus. Many of his depictions of the Persians were rhetorical, and, as a matter of course, he incorporated generalisations, which were typically those expected by his audience who had been brought up with traditional representations of this group. Ammianus was skilled in rhetorical technique, however, being personally present at some of the events that he wrote about, meant that these representations were often at times based on his own perceptions, rather than what actually occurred.

## SAPOR II

### Summary of the Causes of Anger for Sapor

CAUSE OF ANGER	REFERENCE
Notions of outrage at an insult, disrespect or injustice	19.1.6, 19.7.8, 19.8.1, 20.7.3, 20.7.8, 25.8.13, 27.12.11, 27.12.18
TOTAL 8	

From 338–368 the Great King Sapor II remained one of Rome’s greatest adversaries. Sapor was dangerous for the Romans because of, amongst other factors, his violent temper. In fact, this also created much tension amongst his own people, who had to personally suffer his rages. In order to appease their king, the armies of Sapor would vigorously attack their enemy to demonstrate their worth before him. Sapor was not only feared by his people, he was adored by them. His ability to lead as a general and make good strategic decisions saw him outlive all the Roman emperors in Ammianus’ narrative, i.e. Constantius II, Julian and Jovian, who sought to defeat, or at least subdue him. Sapor’s ability to control such huge forces and have them obey his every whim was naturally of great concern to Ammianus, especially as he had had personal contact with Sapor’s army, narrowly escaping with his life.<sup>97</sup>

Table 2.1 shows the books that deal with specific instances of anger in relation to Persians and barbarians. The peak was in book nineteen, which has ten occurrences of specific instances of anger,

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<sup>97</sup> Cf. Blockley (1988) 248.



where three of these refer to the anger of Sapor, and two specifically refer to his *ira*. Through a close study of his history, it is apparent that Ammianus was greatly concerned with anger and imperial figures — something that will be the focus of Chapter Three. As the leading opponent of the Roman Empire, Ammianus saw Sapor as the epitome of the true enemy of Rome, and devoted much space in his *Res Gestae* to this powerful ruler. This meant that, “...the most mentioned negative quality is Sapor’s rage (19.1.6: *orantibus potissimis ducibus, ne profusus in iram a gloriosis descisceret coeptis*; 20.7.3: *ira tamen tum sequestrata*; 20.7.8: *efferata vesania regis obstante*; 20.7.11: *rabiem regis*; 27.12.11: *Sapor ultra hominem efferatus*).”<sup>98</sup>

One thing that immediately becomes obvious in Ammianus’ representations was that Sapor was not a capricious savage out to plunder and destroy, he was instead intent on obtaining fortresses and territories, in a sustained effort to expand and protect his borders. This was something that barbarian groups, such as the Huns and Goths, were apparently unconcerned with. An example of his desire to feel secure was shown at 27.12.18, when Sapor became furious (*pervitus*) at the emperor Valentinian who had betrayed him, through dividing Hiberia without first consulting him. Moreover, Valentinian had broken his treaty with Sapor by giving help to the Armenians. At 27.12.11 Sapor was outraged when Papa was elevated as king of Armenia by the Romans. Armenia was a centre of conflict because it provided a buffer state and was of strategic importance as it directed the military routes between Asia Minor and central Persia. Both Rome and Persia had attempted to establish a protectorate over Armenia, and this explains the reaction of Sapor over this hotly contested region which he had desperately sought to control.<sup>99</sup> Faustus, the fifth-century Armenian historian, recorded that previous to this, the emperor Jovian had ceded a major part of Armenia to Sapor during the peace treaty of 363, in which Jovian allegedly stated:

I have ceded unto you (Sapor) the town of Medzpin (Nisibis) in Arousatan, also Assyrian Mesopotamia, and as for the inland regions of Armenia, I abandon them and if you are able to

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<sup>98</sup> Drijvers (unpublished) 9; cf. Seager (1986) 35.

<sup>99</sup> Bullough (1963) 57.

conquer and subdue them, I promise not to come to the assistance of the Armenians.

(4.21, tr. B. Sidwell)

Sapor clearly felt he had a right to this region and to dictate what happened to its rulers. He felt that he had been shamefully treated (*pati se exclamans indigna*) by the actions of the emperor, and his response was to take revenge upon the Romans. As such, Sapor's anger manifested itself through this notion of outrage, and his first instinct was to acquire as much support as possible. This therefore relates to determinants of anger, "(2) a sense of betrayal, when there is an acute awareness of disappointment," and "(3) a response to righteous indignation." Anger made Sapor's resolve stronger and his desire for revenge increased his determination to devastate Armenia. The consequence of this was that Roman forces were sent in to counter Sapor's attack. The Romans were successful and ensured that Papa remained king, as well as recovering the fortresses from the Persians. In addition, Roman troops were stationed throughout Armenia, securing it firmly into Roman possession.<sup>100</sup> Sapor, furious as ever, sent in more troops, but it was Papa himself who finally settled this matter.

Modern behaviourists have made studies which deal with anger and revenge, and Sapor's reaction fits into a recognisable profile. For the Persian king certainly dwelt on the Roman transgression and dreamt of revenge, as well debating internally how to effectively retaliate against the transgressor.<sup>101</sup> What made Sapor different was that his radius of will was far greater than that of the subjects studied by psychologists today. Sapor was able to take out violent revenge against those who transgressed his sense of justice through the use of the power he possessed, whereas the individuals studied by psychologists have much more limited radii of will and cannot always act out their fantasies of revenge.

According to our sources, Papa poisoned the great Armenian Catholicos, Nerses, who was a very close Roman ally. Papa nominated Iusik as a replacement and sent him for consecration to the bishop of Caesarea, Basil. But Basil refused to consecrate the nominee. Valens requested that Basil quickly resolve the situation

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<sup>100</sup> Bullough (1963) 59.

<sup>101</sup> Barber *et al.* (2005) 255.

by finding a new nominee acceptable to Papa. Basil failed to do so and the Roman see of Caesarea effectively lost its traditional role of consecrating the Catholicos of Armenia. Papa's refusal to cooperate with Basil angered Valens. In addition, Papa demanded control over Caesarea and twelve other Roman cities including Edessa, as former Arsacid domains, while openly courting Persia.<sup>102</sup> Valens decided to execute Papa and invited him to a meeting in Tarsus. Papa arrived with 300 mounted escorts but quickly became anxious when he found out Valens was not there in person, so he fled back to Armenia (30.5.17). The general Terentius sent two generals with *scutarii*, familiar with the local terrain, after Papa, an Armenian named Danielus and an Iberian named Barzimeres who failed to capture and execute Papa. According to Ammianus (30.1.1–23; 30.2.1), Valens consigned Trainaus to gain Papa's confidence and murder him. Trainaus murdered Papa in 374 during a banquet that he had organized for the young king.<sup>103</sup> Sapor was disappointed with these events for, in place of Papa, whom he had hoped to win to his side, in 375, the Roman army installed an Arsacid prince, Warasdat, as nominee of the empire (30.2.1).<sup>104</sup>

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Although we have a number of instances of the direct anger of Sapor, from what Ammianus has written it would appear that Sapor was able to control his anger to a far greater extent than the majority of Roman emperors that Ammianus discussed in his extant narrative. The great king was often able to channel his anger into something positive, and the result was often victories for the Persians against the indecision of the Romans. Nowhere was this more evident than during the siege of Amida in 359 (18.8ff.), where Ammianus described the contrast between the determination and hostility of Sapor, with the corruption of the court of Constantius and the dealings with Ursicinus.<sup>105</sup> This led ultimately to victory for the Persians, and has been described as, "Persian vigour, demonic determination, and good planning, against Roman corruption,

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<sup>102</sup> Baynes (1910) 640.

<sup>103</sup> Faustus, 5.32, credits this scheme to Terentius and Addaeus.

<sup>104</sup> Faustus, 5.32: Cf. Baynes (1910) 64.

<sup>105</sup> Cf. Seager (1997) 257.

incompetence, and inertia.”<sup>106</sup> This was not the first time that Constantius had had to deal with Persian forces destroying this fortress on the upper Tigris, for whilst still a Caesar he had rebuilt its walls after the previous attack (18.9.1). What this revealed was the renewal of Persian aggression, and reflected the changed circumstances in the east since Gallus had been entrusted with its defence in 351.<sup>107</sup> In fact, Sapor had reasserted his right to Armenia and Mesopotamia and by encouraging his enemies to join forces with him took on the powers of Rome. Though discouraged by his failures in taking Nisibis three times previously by siege, the siege of Amida was begun in earnest after the son of the king of the Chionitae was killed before its walls.<sup>108</sup> What this incident revealed was that anger, when focused positively, had dramatically different results from anger turned against those who were potential supporters.

Although anger could be a force for positive change, Ammianus wrote (29.2.18) that, “it is the task of a good ruler to keep his power in check, to resist the passions of unbridled desire and implacable rage” (*resistere cupiditati omnium rerum et implacabilibus iracundiis*).<sup>109</sup> Emotional control was apparent in Sapor’s reaction towards the Romans at Amida in 359. Despite his rage against the defenders, he was calmed by his attendants, and cooled off enough to listen to their advice. He therefore decided to request the surrender of the Romans on the next day, instead of deviating from his “glorious enterprises” (19.1.6). This reveals that keeping a cool head at times of extreme crisis could mean the difference between a peaceful surrender, and a bloody massacre on both sides. This in effect was in accordance with what Seneca wrote, for if, “Someone thinks himself injured, he wills revenge, but he settles down at once when some consideration dissuades him. I do not call this anger, this movement of the mind obedient to reason” (*De ira* 2.3.4, tr. Sorabji (2000) 74).

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<sup>106</sup> Blockley (1988) 247–248.

<sup>107</sup> *CAH*<sup>2</sup> 13, 39.

<sup>108</sup> On the siege of Amida, see Ammianus 19.1–9; Matthews (1989) 57–66. At Nisibis, see *CAH*<sup>2</sup> 13, 41. Nisibis was besieged by Sapor in 338, 346 and 350, Jones (1964) 112.

<sup>109</sup> Cf. Brandt (1999) 170.

There were, however, times when Sapor did not control his anger, and even appeared to behave as a common soldier, giving sway to his emotions, though this could also represent a typical tyrant. The comments that Ammianus made on the rage of Sapor suggest that the historian took this ruler's anger very seriously, as it affected Romans. However, again, these remarks were very few, and only three times did Ammianus make a specific comment on the anger of Sapor. One incident of Sapor's anger was so remarkable that it would be surprising if Ammianus did not make some observation. This occurred in 359, during the siege of Amida, in which Sapor was so frustrated at his troops' lack of success that he actually rushed into the fray himself like an ordinary soldier, the consequence of which was that many of his attendants, who were compelled to accompany him, were killed. Of this, Ammianus (19.7.8) wrote, "This was a novel and quite unprecedented event" (*novo et nusquam antea cognito more*). Though the historian did not say outright whether he disapproved of this action, we know that when Julian made a similar attack under the influence of anger (24.5.6), this was met with no support from Ammianus. Here, Sapor was clearly acting hot-headedly and was naturally conspicuous due to the number of attendants in his suite. Ammianus could not approve of the actions of a leader, Roman or otherwise, who behaved irrationally. However, this sort of behaviour could be inspirational and one would presume that if it had been effective it would have received some acclaim.

Sapor, as the king of the Persians, was never treated in the writings of Ammianus as other foreigners were. Naturally, he was always regarded warily, but the historian was constantly ready to comment on the discipline of his troops and his well thought out strategies, something that he rarely, if ever, did for the barbarians. Sapor was also worthy of a higher report for he listened to his advisers, who, unlike many of the advisors to the Roman emperors whom Ammianus discussed, made straightforward requests that the great king frequently listened to.

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When *ira* was used to describe the anger of the Persians, it implied a degree of sophistication and the knowledge that they were experiencing this emotion with an element of justification and an

enhanced ability to cognitively appraise each situation, which did not come through in the *furor* or *rabies* of the barbarian enemy. Especially in regards to Sapor, their anger was something to be very wary of, as it was not the reckless savagery of the barbarians, but the cunning ruthlessness of a more advanced enemy. One of the most successful opponents of the Romans, the Persians remained a constant threat right throughout the extant books of Ammianus' *Res Gestae*. This success of the Persians was in no small way due to the respect that they had for their leader, as well as the sheer numbers that Sapor could afford to throw at the Romans. Moreover, though there were deserters, the Persian soldiers never combined in unanimous opposition to their leader that we know of, and this was another quality that ensured their success as a military force.

## CONCLUSION

Ammianus reported barbarian anger in incidents which he saw as worthy of reporting, whether to enhance the glory of Rome, or to show how the Roman military reacted when threatened by the barbarian presence. Ammianus presented his audience with typical descriptions of the barbarians, which augmented their savage and wild natures. These descriptions were often enhanced through the comparison of barbarians to wild animals.<sup>110</sup> Although the barbarians were often contrasted with beasts, Ammianus did state that the Germans were brave and could be devoted to a good general (25.6.14, 18.2.6). His barbarians were not unusual in the sense of historiography, but they did say a lot about his writing of historiography and his desire to portray what he and his audience deemed barbarians were, rather than what their actual behaviour or appearance was.

The bloodthirsty nature of the times came across strongly in Ammianus' portrayals of the Roman military, but the barbarians were similarly subject to strong pressures which saw them react to the Romans' incursions into what they perceived was their territory. This was something that the historian seemed very much aware of. At certain stages in Ammianus' narrative there were

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<sup>110</sup> Although I should here stress that Ammianus does not limit his wild animal descriptions to barbarians. Romans were on occasion compared to beasts, cf. Wiedemann (1986) 201.

notions that Ammianus was not unsympathetic to certain responses of the barbarians when they were responding to feelings of outrage. This was apparent when the Quadi responded violently to the death of their king (29.6.6), and when the Thervingi were being mistreated by the Romans and became violent as a result (31.5.5). The recurring theme we get from these instances of barbarian anger is the notion that the barbarians were trying to defend their lands, and once they perceived that the Romans were becoming a threat, they reacted violently. It was effective Roman policy to create and prolong a sense of fear in the barbarians, for this helped keep them in check and often prevented further outbreaks of violence.<sup>111</sup> To the Romans, anger was a definite danger, but when that anger was replaced by dread, it was a far more effective means of controlling potentially violent groups.

As with the categorisation of barbarians under certain groupings, such as untrustworthy, savage, violent, uncultured, to name but a few, historians also liked to group barbarians into easy to define units, such as the "Alamanni," "Goths," "Celts," and so forth.<sup>112</sup> What this did was to preserve a form and distinction that suited each barbarian group that, for the Romans, was unchanging. This then gave the emperors a definite enemy to overcome and conquer, and when this was achieved it made the Romans feel more secure about themselves than if they were defeating an unknown and therefore more terrifying group of opponents (cf. Dio 71.3.5).<sup>113</sup>

By associating barbarians with wild beasts, this gave the Romans another means of organising them. For example, the historian presented the Isaurians as extremely notorious in his accounts, and to him they were no more than bandits and pirates. Ammianus (19.13.1) described them as, "snakes darting forth from

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<sup>111</sup> Cf. Seager (1999) 590.

<sup>112</sup> For this organization of barbarians into "generic categories," see Hummer (1998) 3.

<sup>113</sup> "Because the Romans call all those who inhabit the northern regions Germans," Hummer (1998) 4. This gave rise to the titulature that was attached to winning emperors and generals, such as when Marcus Aurelius was lauded with the title of *Germanicus* after defeating the Marcomanni in 172.

their holes, sallying forth from their rocky and inaccessible mountain fastness.” Even the name “Isaurian” conjured up images of barbarism and banditry for the Romans. The *Expositio totius mundi* (45) published shortly after the Isaurian incident which Ammianus recorded, stated, “Isauria, which is said to have strong men who are also known to commit robberies now and then, rather wish to be adversaries of the Romans, but they are not able to conquer the unconquerable name.”<sup>114</sup> Ammianus was very abrupt in his language when describing the Isaurians, not regarding them as anything special or even a real threat to Rome, merely an annoyance that could be avoided if so desired. In the end, the Romans responded to the Isaurians by destroying their strongholds and moving a large percentage of their population to Thrace.<sup>115</sup>

Another method of organising people was to contrast the good against the bad in a way which added a distinctive moralistic tone to many of his depictions. However, there was occasionally a fine line between what Ammianus believed was the correct course of action that the Romans should be taking, and the deplorable way in which they sometimes treated their neighbours, especially those they sought to form alliances with. We have pages full of the victorious deeds of the Roman military against the flawed enemy, wherein the Romans often had the advantage due to their strict discipline and ordered military tactics. The knowledge that they were gaining victories for the betterment, or at least the preservation, of the Roman Empire was certainly, in the historian’s eyes, far more important than the occasional mistreatment of the barbarians.

In Chapter One I mentioned the readily accepted fact that the incorporation of barbarians into the Roman army made them acquire and develop Roman traits. This would naturally include learning Latin, knowledge of the traditions of Roman culture, Roman ways of living, using Roman implements and learning about the Roman military machine, with all the industry attached to it. The barbarians could not help but become “Romanised” with all

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<sup>114</sup> Cf. Honey (2006) 54.

<sup>115</sup> By the sixth century they had become integrated into Greco-Roman society as soldiers and priests, having fully embraced Christianity, Honey (2006) 55. As well they produced two emperors, Zeno (474–491) and Leo III (717–741); Leo’s successors ruled until 802.



this close contact. This then leads us to consider Hummer's proposal that Ammianus became accustomed to the ways of the barbarians through his association with them in the Roman army.<sup>116</sup> These were not the untamed or ill-disciplined barbarians that the legions would face in combat but, by now, well-trained men who were easily integrated into Roman society, and therefore it is less easy to maintain Hummer's presumption as an adequate interpretation here, for Ammianus was describing outsider barbarians, not those integrated into Roman society.

Ammianus knew of the behaviour of barbarians from his own observations, as well as from eyewitness accounts. Certainly, he embellished his accounts in order to fit in with the Romans' accustomed view of barbarians, for a tamer viewpoint would have aroused scorn from those who expected worse. Ammianus knew his subjects well and knew how his audience would receive them. Through the examination of anger and its often justifiable causes, I hope to have shown that Ammianus was aware (at least at certain times) of the humanity of the barbarians.

However, the notion that the barbarians were becoming Roman did not mean that those who were settled in the provinces and those areas still untamed by the Romans did not invoke suspicion in our historian. Ammianus did not have an insight into the future, but by 394 he was aware that the situation was looking grim, hence his verdict on Adrianople. His main concern was that the uneducated and uncivilised were coming up through the ranks and taking on positions of authority that they did not deserve.<sup>117</sup> Ammianus had some concerns, but he never made the suggestion that barbarians should not be allowed into the military, after all, they had been incorporated in the auxiliaries for centuries. This was a view put forward by much later scholars.

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<sup>116</sup> Hummer (1998) 8 n. 27.

<sup>117</sup> Whereas he, a cultivated Greek-speaker, must have deserved his rank and position, as did his hero Julian.

### 3. ANGER AND EMPERORS AND CAESARS IN THE *RES GESTAE*

After promulgating the law about adulterers, in which it was specified how the accused were to be tried, and how the convicted were to be punished, he (Augustus) later, under stress of anger, fell upon a young man whose name had been linked in gossip with his daughter Julia, and struck him with his fists; but when the young man cried out, “You have made a law, Caesar,” such a revulsion of feeling came over him that he refused food the rest of the day.

(Plutarch, *Moralia* 207E, tr. F.C. Babbitt)

#### INTRODUCTION

As will be shown in Chapter 6, virtues, such as the ability to restrain one’s anger, was, for a ruler, a theme explored by philosophers and historians throughout the ages. The traditional belief that a ruler should restrain his anger was still an important aspect of political instruction in the fourth century.<sup>1</sup> During this period there remained a concern with virtues as displayed by the emperors. We have strong evidence for this in the panegyric texts from Eusebius, Julian, Themistius, Libanius (Libanius’ *Oration* 16 is called, *To the Antiochenes: On the Emperor’s Anger*), Symmachus, Ambrose, Synesius and Claudian. However, in much of their writings, the notion of anger control was replaced with gentleness and philanthropy. The emperor must be “noble, wise, brave,

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. Harris (2001) 261.

dignified, kind, merciful, just, devoted to his people, chaste in his private life, moderate, generous, truthful, prudent, self-restrained, modest.” However, “the emperor’s control over his anger is rather conspicuously absent from the Latin prose panegyrics.”<sup>2</sup> When we read the history by Ammianus, a contemporary of these other writers, who would certainly be familiar with at least some of their works, we are able to see how he builds upon this slightly altered ideology. Our historian became most concerned by the excesses of anger when it was shown by an emperor, but he never went to the extremes of Seneca with his significant political purpose in mind, and did not write a default piece on the necessity of controlling one’s emotions, Ammianus was far more subtle than that. However, he did not go as far as the panegyrists either, for his Julian was undeniably flawed.

One of the purposes of the *Res Gestae* was to demonstrate the inherent dangers that anger could create and lead to.<sup>3</sup> At certain points in the *Res Gestae*, almost every emperor described by Ammianus displayed some form of anger. The historian did not refrain from recording these instances, as, in general, displays of anger by emperors were a rare occurrence, or else were rarely reported, and were regarded as significant episodes to record for posterity, for they had huge potential impact on the wider society. The reconstruction of past events was given added expression through the displays of emotion that the emperors exhibited. As with Ammianus’ descriptions of the soldiers and barbarians, emotions were an inevitable part of actual events, for not even an emperor, with his imperial dignity, could refrain from showing some form of feeling forever. Events surrounding the emperors received significance, because these imperial figures were often personally involved, and their responses were crucial for the smooth functioning of the empire. As well as this, these descriptions of anger were judged by Ammianus as he compared them to his perceptions of the ideal ruler. The *Res Gestae* was essentially a biographical account of the emperors,<sup>4</sup> and because of

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<sup>2</sup> Harris (2001) 257–258.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Seager (1986) 34.

<sup>4</sup> Wilshire (1973) 225.

that the historian's rhetorical language was put to full use as he breathed life into the royal personages.

As with the Roman military, Ammianus was concerned that the imperial figures were behaving in ways that were in the best interests for Rome and the provinces. When he perceived that they were not, he did not hesitate to record what the negative consequences of their behaviour were. Ammianus seemed especially aware in his descriptions of emperors that these figures provided the cohesion, and indeed the required fascination needed, to draw his audience in. Therefore the emperors became larger than life. Ultimately, the emperors provided for Ammianus a rich source of historical material for giving depth and life to his narrative, and although he may not have always supported such individuals as Constantius and Valentinian, "he does not criticise the monarchy as an institution."<sup>5</sup> For Ammianus, this establishment was essential for continuing the structure of administration and governance into late Roman times, for Rome, "like a thrifty parent, wise and wealthy had entrusted the management of her inheritance to the Caesars, as to her children" (14.6.5).

What this study reveals is that Ammianus did not include instances of anger for all the emperors he discussed in his narrative, yet he did mention certain bad predispositions within the nature of Gratian and Jovian, the two emperors who did not exhibit direct anger within the historian's text. They were not necessarily angry people, but had other faults that let them down. Thus at 31.10.18 he characterises Gratian:

He was a young man of remarkable talent, eloquent, controlled, warlike, and merciful, and seemed likely to rival the best of his predecessors while the down of youth was still spreading over his cheeks. But he had an innate tendency to play the fool which his intimates made no attempt to check, and this seduced him into the frivolous pursuits of the emperor Commodus, though he was never bloodthirsty.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Wilshire (1973) 224.

<sup>6</sup> *Praeclaræ indolis adolescens, facundus et moderatus et bellicosus et clemens, ad aemulationem lectorum progrediens principum, dum etiamtum lanugo genis inserperet speciosa, ni vergens in ludibriosos actus natura laxantibus proximis semet ad vana*

The emperors brought to Ammianus' history a sense of individuality and humanness that we do not find in his descriptions of collective groups. However, he did appear to distort certain details in order to create generalisations and form assumptions, which were based on how much he liked or disliked certain imperial figures. As for those emperors whom he disliked, he often used this technique in order to disassociate himself from them, for, being extremely moralistic, he distanced himself from behaviour which was seen to be in opposition to the ancient traditional Roman values. For example, Ammianus stated that Constantius should have, "laboured with extreme care to model his life and character in rivalry with those of the constitutional emperors."<sup>7</sup> It is here, in the historian's approach towards the emperors and Caesars, that we gain a serious insight into the character and personality of Ammianus the man.

However, some would say that Ammianus was not acting on random impulse when it came to describing the behaviour of his emperors, for, "Ammianus refuses to make his emotions the basis for his practical choices," as, "the separation between emotions and perception of realities was indispensable to Ammianus, if his conservatism were to have any substance at all."<sup>8</sup> That is not to say that he refrained from arousing carefully chosen emotional responses in his audience. Ammianus clearly supported the emperor Julian, a fellow pagan,<sup>9</sup> as he embodied, for Ammianus, all the hopes for a regeneration of the Empire.<sup>10</sup> The career of Julian was narrated in ten of the extant eighteen books of the *Res Gestae*,<sup>11</sup>

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*studia Caesaris Commodi convertisset, licet hic incruentus.* Gratian certainly had excellent points on one hand, but these were balanced by his defects such as hunting, which detracted from his official duties, Brandt (1999) 93.

<sup>7</sup> Wilshire (1973) 223.

<sup>8</sup> Momigliano (1977) 135.

<sup>9</sup> For Ammianus' references to pagan beliefs, see for example, 15.8.9, 14.11.25–26, 23.5.10. Cf. Momigliano (1977) 134; and Hunt (1985) 187, "only a pagan could have written a history so pervaded by the religiosity of omens and fate, and one in which the pagan emperor Julian was the — albeit flawed — hero." For Julian's paganism, see Jones (1964) 121.

<sup>10</sup> Camus (1967) 127.

<sup>11</sup> Smith (1999) 89.

and through this expansive discourse Ammianus encouraged his audience to respond positively to the deeds of this short-lived emperor. In contrast, he regarded the Pannonian-born Valens and Valentinian<sup>12</sup> as culturally inferior,<sup>13</sup> who, as ‘barbarians’, were naturally more inclined to express their emotions loudly and with open expression, even though it was said that Valentinian was learned in some aspects of culture, for he was able to exchange verses from Virgil around the dinner table, *vir meo iudicio eruditus*. As well as being from a culturally poor background, Valens and Valentinian also held no hereditary right to the throne, even though they had assumed the title of emperor legally.<sup>14</sup> This was another reason for Ammianus not to support them, although this is in contrast to Ammianus’ attitude towards Procopius (26.6.1ff.), who did have a hereditary right to the throne, but tried to obtain it illegally.

Being ‘barbarian’ did have some benefits, for it meant that the general population more readily accepted these two Pannonian born emperors, as they were seen to be less stringent on taxation and heavy dues than the ‘Roman’ emperors levied upon them. Indeed, it was the commoners who were most willing to let barbarians into the empire. Nevertheless, the historian was a strong adherent of the senatorial class, even if he himself was not a member. For him, as for the senatorial elite, Valentinian and his

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<sup>12</sup> Although it may seem that Ammianus regarded those from Pannonia as uncultured and semi-barbarian — which is in support of Alföldi’s (1952) criticism — in fact, at 27.3.11, Ammianus praised the Pannonian born Viventius, who had risen to become prefect of Rome, whom he described as, “an upright and wise Pannonian, under whose quiet and peaceful administration there was general plenty.” Barnes (1998) 111–119 claimed that Ammianus held cultural prejudices about the inhabitants of Illyricum and their *furor*, *ferocia*, *feritas* and *superbia*, were deeply rooted for centuries in Roman minds, cf. Salmon (1986); Dzino (2006) for Mediterranean cultural prejudices towards the inhabitants of Illyricum. For a defence of the Pannonians, see Matthews (1975) 41.

<sup>13</sup> Cf. Matthews (1989) 238. The emperor Jovian was also of Pannonian origin, Jones (1964) 141, but did not receive criticism for his background. For the Pannonian emperors, see especially Lenski (2002) 56–61.

<sup>14</sup> Treadgold (1997) 64.

brother did not fit into the standard of traditional Roman culture, and consequently they were suspect to this class.<sup>15</sup> When emperors did not conform to the traditional stereotypes, then they were bound to receive a bad impression from our historian. Valentinian's necrology contained not only what he did wrong, but also how Ammianus believed he should have behaved. By associating Valens and Valentinian with barbarians, he brought them to the level where he could draw ridicule to their characters, whereas a Roman-born emperor (or at least one from a civilised urban centre) would not be regarded so despairingly.

At 26.8.2, during the siege of Chalcedon, the supporters of the usurper Procopius ridiculed Valens, calling him "Sabaiarius," which literally translates as 'beer-swiller'. Beer was a poor man's drink in Illyricum, and drunk by those who were uncultivated and ill used to the far more sophisticated drink of choice of the Romans, *vinum*. In this respect, "this episode complements Ammianus' picture of Valens as he wanted him to be presented: a timid, cruel, uneducated, drunken semi-barbarian rustic from Pannonia, ugly and crude both in appearance and character."<sup>16</sup> This then supports Pauw, who stated that Ammianus described the emperors through the "indirect method" of character portrayal, where comparison, contrast and innuendo were particularly important.<sup>17</sup> These reminiscences reflected Ammianus' clear prejudices throughout his portrayals, and his language was carefully constructed in order to arouse similar emotional responses in his audience, which he himself was alleged to have felt.

What Ammianus aimed at in much of his presentations was instruction on how an emperor should behave, and also to what extent he should remove himself from the mortal plain so that he could be presented to his public as something much higher, indeed,

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<sup>15</sup> McGeachy (1955) 280. Kulikowski (2007) 251 pointed out the comparisons that Ammianus made between Valentinian and Hadrian. That Ammianus was writing from a senatorial tradition descended from Tacitus, "the comparison could only be unflattering." Cf. Seyfarth (1969) 449–455.

<sup>16</sup> Dzino (2005b) 66.

<sup>17</sup> Pauw (1977) 185–186. On Ammianus' skill in characterisation, see also Thompson (1947) 121–124.

as someone who was above reproach. This was especially important when performing official duties, such as during Constantius' famous entrance into Rome in 357 (16.10.2–10), his first and only visit to the city.<sup>18</sup> Ammianus detailed the Augustus' stance, his face carefully composed not to reveal any emotion at all, which brought him closer to the appearance of a god.<sup>19</sup> This unnatural state was something that seemed admirable to the historian, and the ability to control one's emotions was especially important to the Stoics, of whom Ammianus was a like-thinker. Stoics saw anger as a passion, something that happens to us. Therefore anger and its resulting aggression, "omit no time of life, exempt no race of human beings" (Sen. *De ira* 3.22). Nobody is safe from anger, for, "We are all bad" (Sen. *De ira* 3.26).

As we have previously discussed when looking at the Persian King Sapor, there were times when a show of emotion was important for someone in authority to transmit a message to an individual or a collective group. And in fact, anger was especially useful for making others follow commands, as it often created fear as an emotional response in the receiver.<sup>20</sup> This would, in the majority of instances, prompt those subject to that anger into action. The use of emotions to initiate effect is revealed in the following example from Libanius:

In this situation Constantius resorted to the same trick of calling in the barbarians by letter as he had done before, and begging them as a favour to enslave Roman territory. One out of many he induced to break his word, and he began to ravage and also to make merry in the lands he had got as his reward, and he went to dine with the generals on our side as though he had done nothing wrong at all. This fellow, who had dared break the treaty, he (Julian) arrested in his cups, and, crossing over into his territory, inflicted a well-deserved punishment for his treachery. Those who had bided loyally by their agreements gathered in alarm, greatly ashamed at such misconduct, and added oath upon oath, and he mounted a tribunal in the

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<sup>18</sup> For a more detailed study on Constantius' visit to Rome, see Edbrooke (1976) 40–61. Cf. Noy (2000) 15.

<sup>19</sup> MacMullen (1964) 439.

<sup>20</sup> On this topic, see MacMullen (1988) 84–96.



middle of barbarian country, gazed down upon their chieftains who stood as subjects with their hordes of followers, and after issuing threats and reminders, took his leave.

(*Lib. Or.* 18.107–8, tr. A.F. Norman)

Modern behaviourists who examine the effects of anger and its consequences also acknowledge that anger can be used to intimidate others, often physically.<sup>21</sup> It is a well known fact that anger is an effective device used to control others.

It was essential for those close to the emperor to be aware of what emotional state his Augustus was currently in, for then he could make either the appropriate changes to his behaviour, or give the correct orders to others. This then goes to explain why Ammianus so often records the emotions that correspond with an emperor’s actions.<sup>22</sup>

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**Table 3.1 Summary of anger words  
that deal specifically with Roman emperors**

Book	Number of Anger Words
14	12
15	0
16	3
17	1
18	0
19	1
20	4
21	0
22	4
23	1
24	7
25	1
26	1

<sup>21</sup> Deffenbacher, *et al.* (1996) 586.

<sup>22</sup> MacMullen (1964) 452 stated that for an emperor, “All emotions appropriate to a scene must be fully expressed, violently, assertively, publicly.” This is a key observation and is more fully examined by Newbold (1990) 261–273.

Book	Number of Anger Words
27	2
28	4
29	3
30	4
31	1

Table 3.1 presents the instances in each book of the *Res Gestae* in which each emperor or Caesar exhibits direct anger, and which Ammianus deems to be significant enough to record for posterity. His descriptions of the emperors' angry feelings are apparent in most of the books; however, the majority occur in books fourteen and twenty-four, which deal with Constantius and the Caesar Gallus in the former, and with Julian in the latter, the significance of which will be examined further on. Ammianus concentrated mainly on five imperial figures, Gallus, Constantius, Julian, Valens and Valentinian, as these five figures had all the traits necessary for the portrayal of heroes and villains that the historian was so fond of. Indeed, sometimes they were, "Grotesque and sadistic, spectral and superstitious, lusting for power yet constantly trying to conceal the chattering of their teeth — so do we see the men of Ammianus' ruling class and their world."<sup>23</sup>

## THE CAUSES OF ANGER FOR THE EMPERORS AND CAESARS

### Summary of the Causes of Anger and Emperors and Caesars

CAUSE OF ANGER	REFERENCE
Disappointment	24.5.10, 25.1.8
Fear	20.4.15
Impatience	16.4.2
Notions of outrage at an insult, disrespect or injustice	14.7.2, 14.7.12, 14.11.23, 16.8.7, 16.11.8, 17.10.8, 22.14.3, 20.2.5, 20.9.2, 22.13.2, 22.14.2, 23.2.4, 24.3.2, 24.3.3, 24.6.17, 26.9.10, 27.7.7, 28.1.11, 28.1.23, 28.2.9, 29.1.27, 30.2.7, 30.5.10, 30.6.3

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<sup>23</sup> Auerbach (1953) 55.

CAUSE OF ANGER	REFERENCE
Treachery	14.5.4, 14.7.4, 14.7.21, 19.12.5, 29.1.27, 29.1.38
Suspicion	14.1.2, 14.7.4, 14.11.13
Threats from an enemy	24.5.6, 24.5.7
<b>TOTAL 39</b>	

The table above reveals that the most numerous causes of anger resulted from outrage, insult and injustice, and then treachery. In fact, a definite pattern can be seen occurring here when these causes are taken together as a whole. The majority of these were possible or real threats to the imperial personage, and certainly the emperors were particularly concerned with such matters as possible treason, as well as lack of cooperation from their subordinates, something which was unacceptable for those in such positions of power. An emperor's position was a lonely one, and it is easy to imagine how paranoia could set in, especially when bombarded by whispers from flatterers seeking to increase their own standing. For example, the flatterers of Constantius were said to increase his severity in matters of treason, 14.1.1; 14.5.4. This then fits in with the third factor of anger "tendencies to perceive ambiguous behaviour as hostile," and this is often interpreted as paranoia. As a consequence, many emperors, not just in Ammianus' time, became overtly suspicious and constantly sought out those who desired to overthrow them. Accordingly, "the *nimietas* of Constantius was by the insinuations of his flatterers,"<sup>24</sup> whilst Julian succeeded on the

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<sup>24</sup> Cf. 16.12.68 (*inflabant ex usu imperatorem suoapte ingenio nimium, quidquid per omnem terrae ambitum agebatur, felicibus eius auspiciis assignantes*). Flatterers also increased the perniciousness of the elite classes, as they "greet every word uttered by the great man with various expressions of hypocritical applause," 28.4.12. Cf. Humphries (1999) 117f. Ammianus blames the praetorian prefect Rufinus, the general Arbitio, the eunuch Eusebius and the Anicii in Rome for seeking this wealth unjustly. See also Frank (1972) 69–86 for a summation of the effects of fiscal abuse, especially during the fourth century. And, as Matthews (1989) 34 points out, political dissension was a reality during Constantius' reign. His suspicions therefore could not always be said to be baseless.

other hand in controlling his natural *levitas* by requesting his confidantes to criticize his wrong decisions” (25.4.16).<sup>25</sup>

### Constantius II and the Causes of Anger

In his descriptions of the emperor Constantius II, Ammianus revealed how an emperor could focus his rage on one particular individual. The Caesar Gallus was one such individual and was believed by Constantius to be exhibiting treasonous insubordination. This was evident at 14.11.12 when Gallus came to Constantinople and held games in the hippodrome. He even placed a crown on the head of the winning charioteer Thorax. Gallus was also extremely popular with the army, especially with the rank and file, and this was shown in the impulsiveness of Gallus’ troops who killed Montius and Domitianus.<sup>26</sup> Gallus’ popularity seriously worried Constantius, and his concern was a military uprising in favour of the Caesar. As a result of his fear, the Augustus gradually withdrew troops from under his command (14.7.9). In Adrianople, Constantius removed any possibility of Gallus contacting his forces that were willing to support him against the emperor (14.11.13–15). According to Ammianus, Constantius’ anger (*Constantius ultra mortalem modum exarsit*) was caused by fear and anxiety, where anger was used to mask or displace feelings of helplessness (anger determinant number 4), and the only way to remove that fear was to permanently suppress it. Furthermore, when Constantius learnt of what occurred in Constantinople his rage was said to have “passed all bounds” (*ultra mortalem modum exarsit*) (14.11.13). He even separated the Caesar from all potential support by deliberately removing from their posts all the troops stationed in the towns in which the Caesar had to pass through.

When we look at Constantius’ behaviour from a psychological perspective we can see that the emperor’s emotions were linked to access of control. From the way in which Ammianus described the Augustus’ behaviour it appears that the emperor was feeling uncertainty and needed to reinforce his sense of control over the situation. This is because a, “sense of situational control and uncertainty defines fear,” whereas, “a sense of individual control

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<sup>25</sup> *Levioris ingenii, verum hoc instituto rectissimo temperabat emendari se, cum deviare a fruge bona, permittens.*

<sup>26</sup> Thompson (1943) 311.

and certainty defines anger.”<sup>27</sup> Anger was shown by Constantius as a means to enhance and define control. His radius of will was wide, but when he felt unsettled by a potential threat he was forced to react.

Treason was something that no imperial figure could afford to tolerate. Aristotle stated that fear, which is a kind of pain produced by the anticipation of an evil that is harmful or painful, may arise as a result of the anger or enmity of those who have the power to inflict it (Arist. *Rh.* 2.5.1382a21–2).<sup>28</sup>

Gallus’ behaviour was seen by Constantius as nothing more than an attempt to gain popular support by presenting himself as beneficent to the people of Constantinople.<sup>29</sup> As an Arian Christian, Gallus’ religious fervour would have earned little or no complaint from the emperor.<sup>30</sup> This populist behaviour, however, coupled with Constantius’ previously held negative opinion of him, infuriated the emperor beyond measure. Constantius had dealt with usurpers in the past, such as the very recent usurpation of Magnentius,<sup>31</sup> and consequently he was overly sensitive towards any new threats.

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<sup>27</sup> Lerner, *et al.* (2001) 147.

<sup>28</sup> Cf. 2.5.1382a27–30; 2.5.1382a32.

<sup>29</sup> The amount of support that Gallus had has come under question, see Blockley (1975) 467, “His (Constantius’) sources of information from the East were not good, and the reports delivered, which probably included tales of Gallus’ preparations, would have caused the Emperor to be cautious.”

<sup>30</sup> *CAH*<sup>2</sup> 13, 24.

<sup>31</sup> In January 350 Magnentius, who was a *laetus*, born of a Romano-British father and Frankish mother, commanded the Ioviani and the Herculiani into revolt, with the help of Marcellinus, Constans’ *comes rei privatae*, and killed the emperor Constans in Gaul, Jones (1964) 112; Burns (1994) 3f.; Potter (2004) 471. Gallus was afterwards appointed Caesar (351) in order to maintain the eastern frontier whilst Constantius was occupied with Magnentius in the West, Mudd (1984) 101; Blockley (1989) 477. Constantius had no sons, so he relied on his male cousins instead, Potter (2004) 472. For Constantius’ suppression of Magnentius, see Whitby (1999) 79; *PLRE* 1.532.

Ammianus describes several instances of treason in which emperors became directly angry towards threats against their imperial station. However, there were many more instances recorded in the *Res Gestae* where the emperor did not show direct anger towards treasonable offences, but rather anger that was implied, or another emotion, such as fear — thus at times we need to go beyond the sample. The desire to protect one's position was a natural response to genuine or likely betrayal, but what Ammianus was especially concerned with was the extent to which the emperors used violent and often savage means to discover suspected individuals and groups. For example, at 21.16.9 Ammianus wrote of the “bitter and angry suspicions” (*acerbitas eius et iracundia*) of Constantius, for when he suspected that individuals were plotting against him, “he threw himself into its investigation with unbecoming eagerness, and appointed merciless judges to preside over such trials.”<sup>32</sup> When discussing these matters, Ammianus used emotive language which was intended to rouse disapproval of, and prejudices against, Constantius. Unlike Julian, Constantius was viewed as a timid and jealous ruler, prone to angry suspicions,<sup>33</sup> which caused him to respond in a most violent manner. This was disapproved of by the historian, even though it was the emperor's prerogative to remove anybody whom he saw as potentially dangerous to himself.

Ammianus drew a distinction between two modes of behaviour when he described the reaction of emperors towards treasonable situations, for when he described the death of Gallus by men loyal to Constantius, his language remained neutral, but at 21.16.9 his language was cutting, revealing an emperor supposedly thrilling at tortures and executions, and behaving in a most unseemly manner. These biting descriptions occurred especially when acts of treason resulted in trials that were, at least to Ammianus, too close to home. This led Seager to state,

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<sup>32</sup> This is a generalisation, and as such is not included in our pool of data. However, it does serve to demonstrate how dangerous an emperor could become when his fear and suspicions were aroused.

<sup>33</sup> Of his suspicions, see Blockley (1975) 467. Also, Seeck (1921) 228–231; Stein (1959) 133; Piganiol (1972) 101–102; Jones (1964) 116–117, 120. Contrast Brown (1971) 89.

“Constantius, though moderate in other respects, was bitter and implacable in matters of treason.”<sup>34</sup>

To delve further into the mindset of Ammianus and his rhetorical approach towards his descriptions of Constantius, we have the example at 21.16.8–9 where, in the emperor’s obituary, Ammianus wrote of the rage of Constantius, and his manifest cruelty, which, he stated, “easily surpassed that of Caligula and Domitian and Commodus.” At 14.5.5 Ammianus wrote of Constantius, “this fatal fault of cruelty, which in others sometimes grew less with advancing age, in his case became more violent, since a group of flatterers intensified his stubborn resolution.”<sup>35</sup> Ammianus went on in his moralising tone to emphasise that conspicuous praise is won when men yoke their anger and cruelty, such as Cicero and Heraclitus did (21.16.14). This is an example of the praise Ammianus had for those with supreme moral natures, an attitude which he shared with Seneca. Although Cicero and Heraclitus were not always successful, their strict morality was said to have kept them from harming others. Constantius lacked the morality necessary to restrain his angry and cruel impulses.<sup>36</sup> Ammianus also noted that Constantius had neglected the lessons of Cicero and Heraclitus, “The truest glory is won when a man in power totally subdues his cruel and savage and angry impulses and erects in the citadel of his soul a splendid memorial of his victory over himself” (21.16.14).<sup>37</sup> Perhaps, when writing of this, Ammianus had the following words of Seneca in mind, for Seneca, in particular, associated anger with punishment:

So that no one may wrongly suppose that at any time, in any place, anger is advantageous, its unbridled and frenzied madness must be exposed, and the trappings that are its very

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<sup>34</sup> Seager (1986) 21. See especially 14.9.2.

<sup>35</sup> On the cruelty of emperors, cf. Seager (1986) 26. Valentinian and Valens were also accused of cruelty, see 30.8.2ff. and 31.14.5. At 25.4.8, Julian is called *sine crudelitate terribilis*. Cf. Boeft (1991) 257.

<sup>36</sup> Cf. Boeft (1991) 264.

<sup>37</sup> *Illud vero eminere inter praecipuas laudes, cum potestas in gradu velut sub ingum missa nocendi, saeviendi cupiditate et irascendi in arce victoris animi tropaeum erexerit gloriosum.*

own must be restored to it — the torture-horse, the cord, the jail, the cross, the fires encircling living bodies planted in the ground, the drag-hook that seizes corpses too, all the different kinds of chains, the different kinds of punishments, the tearing of limbs, the branding of the forehead and the lairs of terrifying beasts — in the middle of these implements let anger be situated, while hissing dreadful, hideous sounds, even more disgusting than all the instruments through which it rages.

(*De ira*, 3.3.6)

Constantius' reaction to those who threatened his position was not unusual given the examples from Roman history, where cruelty was commonplace. Ammianus perhaps refused to acknowledge that emperors were typically brutal against real or perceived threats to their selves.

### Julian and the Causes of Anger

The Roman emperors were concerned with external as well as internal threats to their imperial station, and the resultant anger was described in a number of instances by Ammianus, who understood that there was almost always an emotional reaction towards any type of threat or outrage — i.e. being made to feel fear. During the winter of 356/357, whilst stationed in Gaul, Julian was besieged by the Alamanni at Sens, and his chief concern became the morale of his troops, as well as the lack of supplies (16.4.2).<sup>38</sup> Ammianus recorded that Julian understandably became angry (*ira exundante*) because of his situation, for he was only allowed a small number of troops for his own protection, and could not sally forth effectively against the enemy (cf. Julian, *Ep. ad Ath.* 278b). Here we get the sense that Ammianus shared his frustration at being in such close proximity to the enemy, but not being in a situation in which he could do anything about it.<sup>39</sup> In fact, the *magister equitum* Marcellus<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>38</sup> Cf. Sen. *De ira* 1.7, *optimum itaque quidam putant, temperare iram, non tollere: eoque detracto quod exundat, ad salutarem modum cogere...* AM, 14.6.18: *paucae domus studiorum seriis cultibus antea celebratae, nunc ludibriis ignaviae torpentis exundante*; 19.8.1: *ad potiunda sperata ira et dolore exundans*. Cf. Jonge (1972) 31

<sup>39</sup> On Julian at Sens, see Seager (1999) 588.



was in a position to aid Julian, but had refused to send any support. Surprisingly, none were sent from the *magister equitum* Ursicinus either, who was another favourite of Ammianus. Julian's anger relates to the factors of anger in the Introduction, "(1) a desire to blame individuals" and "(4) tendencies to discount the role of uncontrollable factors when attributing causality," and determinant of anger, "(1) a response to an accumulation of stress."

It was clear at this stage that Julian and Ursicinus were not on good terms, although Ammianus never mentioned it as such, for to reveal a rift between the two would be to cast an undue negative light on his favourite commander (Ursicinus). However, Ammianus (16.7.1–4) did admit that when Constantius learnt of Marcellus' behaviour, he had him discharged from the army. Marcellus reacted to his dismissal by claiming that Julian was planning a revolt, but Julian, in anticipation of this, sent his own envoy to the emperor, and Marcellus was removed from court (16.8.1).<sup>41</sup>

Against all the odds, Julian successfully defended Sens, and as a result was rewarded by Constantius with the complete command over all the Gallic armies.<sup>42</sup> Ammianus could relate to anger in an imperial figure if it was justified in some manner, and not due to the emperor or Caesar's own incompetence, paranoia, or deliberate misuse of power. If, therefore, anger was positively directed towards an individual or a group who were a source of outrage, then the historian supported it morally, but when its consequence was something foolish that could not be supported in any manner, either emotionally or physically, then the historian condemned it, even when it was his favourite emperor who was exhibiting that anger.

After the battle at Argentoratum against the Alamanni in 357, Julian was acclaimed Augustus by his army (16.12.64). With a display of anger, Julian rebuked and rejected the soldiers' proclamation (*petulantius milites increpabat*). For the victory, coupled with this display of loyalty by the soldiers, would have been seen by Constantius as an immediate threat and a possible cause for civil

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<sup>40</sup> On the fate of Marcellus who succeeded to the post of *magister equitum* of Gaul in AD 356 (16.2.8), see Woods (1995) 266–268.

<sup>41</sup> Cf. Thompson (1947) 46; Julian, *Ep. ad Ath.* 278B; *Lib. Or.* 18.48.

<sup>42</sup> Thompson (1947) 46.

war.<sup>43</sup> Therefore, in 360, Julian again became angry (*indignari... ostendens*) with the army for successfully forcing him to assume the emperorship much against his will (20.4.15).<sup>44</sup> As to this occasion, it has been much discussed as to whether or not the usurpation was forced, or premeditated, by Julian, in a dangerous attempt to assume imperial power himself.<sup>45</sup> It seems, therefore, that the anger he exhibited was a necessity in order to diminish his own responsibility for this situation. In actuality it would have been dangerous for Julian to refuse his soldiers the title they were forcing on him (if that really were the case), for it might have incited their own anger towards him if they felt that they were not being rewarded for their support, and therefore he would have feared for his life.<sup>46</sup> What suggests that this was a carefully staged usurpation was that Julian did not go away at the beginning and think about what had occurred, before allowing himself to be proclaimed Augustus. Ammianus (20.4.9) made it clear that the Caesar had no advisors in this, although Julian (*Ep. Ad Ath* 283B–C) himself wrote that he did. Ammianus remained neutral on this subject, and this suggests that he was not prepared to reveal his own opinion — although what we do know is that Ammianus in general did not support those who took on any form of power illegally, such as Procopius, whom we shall look at in a subsequent chapter.<sup>47</sup>

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<sup>43</sup> Cf. Matthews (1989) 92.

<sup>44</sup> Other historians who described how Julian became emperor are, Lib. *Or.* 12.59, 13.33, 18.97; Julian, *Ep. Ad Ath.* 283–284C; Zos 3.9.1–2; Eunap. *VS* 7.3.8.

<sup>45</sup> See for example Selem (1971) 89–107 and Williams (1997) 61. Matthews (1989) 93 wrote of the usurpation that, “the surprise would rather have been had it not come about.” Cf. Barnes (1998) 155; Bowersock (1978) 49–51.

<sup>46</sup> In fact, Libanius (*Or.* 18.98–99) reported that the soldiers broke into the palace, seized Julian, dragged him to a platform and crowned him.

<sup>47</sup> For a detailed discussion on the usurpation of Julian, see Drinkwater (1983) 348–387. See also Woods (1997) 273f; Williams (1997) 63–68. As Bowersock (1978) 49 pointed out, although Ammianus was not actually witness to the events in Gaul, he certainly was privy to firsthand accounts. Also, as Selem (1971) 105 shrewdly shows, the attempts by Ammianus to improve the account of the usurpation of Julian by carefully leaving out or

Constantius was not able to act out on his aggressive impulses and face the usurper, as he had a much more immediate threat to the east, as he needed to recover Bezabde (20.10.1–3). In 361 the emperor devoted himself to the Persians, so as not to leave a (foreign) enemy at his back (21.7.1). Constantius died on 5 October 361 of a fever before he could deal with Julian.<sup>48</sup> The emperor's fever was said to have been exacerbated by his anger at Julian's usurpation, *febri acerrima, quam indignatio nimia vigiliis augebat, interiit* (Cluever, Johannes — *Epitomes Historiarum* 301). It was said that on his deathbed he was in a clear frame of mind *mentisque sensu...integro*, and that he named Julian his successor, securing his accession beyond all doubt (21.15.2).<sup>49</sup> The latter is highly suspicious and was likely propaganda implemented by Julian to legally support his accession. Ammianus was the only author to report this rumour and the repetition of it made it clear that he was trying to persuade his audience to adhere to it (21.15.5, 22.2.1).<sup>50</sup> The fact that Constantius' anger cooled down was in accordance with Seneca's viewpoint on anger. For Seneca believed that anger must not only be aroused but must rush out, for it was an impulse, and there is no impulse without an assent of the mind. Therefore there is no anger when a man thinks himself injured and wishes to take vengeance, but is immediately settled down by some consideration (*De ira* 2.3.4):

So that first agitation of the mind which the appearance of injustice inflicts is no more anger than is the appearance of injustice itself. It is the subsequent impulse, which not only receives but approves the appearance of injustice that is anger.<sup>51</sup>

(2.3.5)

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placing less stress on certain aspects is the result of the author looking for an equilibrium, as he could not hide his liking for this figure.

<sup>48</sup> Matthews (1989) 101.

<sup>49</sup> For this terminology, see Boeft (1991) 232.

<sup>50</sup> See also Zos. 3.9.2, and Zonar. 13.11.1, for a hostile portrait of Julian's civil war.

<sup>51</sup> Cf. Knuuttila (2004) 64.

A thorough reading of the usurpation reveals much and has been treated by others far more thoroughly than can be done here. Briefly, Ammianus portrayed his character of Julian as being almost innocent in the whole affair, being promoted to Augustus against his will by his Gallic troops. Through careful literary manipulation, Ammianus made it seem as though Constantius was being unreasonably angry, his emotions unjustified in the extreme, for according to our historian, Julian had ascended the throne out of necessity more than anything. However, if we look past Ammianus' rhetorical devices, we can see that the emperor was in fact justified in his emotions, for he saw that Julian was a transgressor of the established cultural norms and bypassed the established laws.<sup>52</sup>

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As we saw in Chapter One, Ammianus was generally supportive of the *ira militum* of Roman soldiers, but when it came to leaders exhibiting anger there was often a negative connotation attached to the greater potential for harm. When Julian exhibited anger towards the Persians at 24.5.6, and recklessly endangered his life, this was met with language that held no supportive elements from the historian, for he described the Augustus grinding his teeth with rage (*iratus et frendens*). Indeed Julian had approached the Persian fort with some of his men and came so recklessly close to its walls that he was lucky to escape with his life. Here we have the irregular mood of Julian plainly set out, which was becoming more and more removed from Ammianus' own set of ideals concerning the behaviour of emperors. Ammianus abhorred violent and changeable moods in his emperors.<sup>53</sup> During Julian's Persian campaign, as he marched from Maiozamalcha to the region around Ctesiphon,<sup>54</sup> Ammianus described Julian's increasing loss of self-control, which perhaps indicated stress.<sup>55</sup> Indeed this behaviour reflected determinants of anger, numbers 1 and 6, which deal with, "a

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<sup>52</sup> "Constantius' reaction is in accordance with Ammianus' description of his temper, cf. 20.2.5," Boeft (1987) 223. Cf. 14.11.13; 29.1.10; 21.10.2; 26.6.14 and 30.5.10.

<sup>53</sup> Cf. Humphries (1999) 122.

<sup>54</sup> For the parallel account by Zosimus, see 3.23.1–24.1.

<sup>55</sup> Boeft (2002) 149. There is no clear statement in any of the histories as to what prompted Julian into invading Persia, see Jones (1964) 123f.

response to an accumulation of stress,” and, “a learnt response to certain situations.” Lack of reserve came through as part of the main clause, *imperator iratus et frendens*, for Julian was angry when the Persians made a surprise attack on his army, and manifested this anger through the grinding of his teeth and a determination to take the Persian fortress. Here, as often in Ammianus’ accounts of the military, anger overcame fear. This anger was natural for any leader, and perhaps this was why, although there was no supportive language, there was no written disapproval evident in Ammianus’ record, though clearly it deserved some.<sup>56</sup>

In his entire *Res Gestae*, Ammianus used the term *frendere* seven times and four of these were to describe barbarians.<sup>57</sup> This then suggests that the application of *frendere* to Julian meant that the emperor was certainly lacking in the composure that ought to have been exhibited by a man of his station.<sup>58</sup> When Ammianus described the actions and behaviour of Julian, it was generally assumed that he was actively supporting the emperor’s decisions. However, the above example clearly reveals that Ammianus did not always agree with Julian’s behaviour, for the emperor was acting rashly and without proper consideration. Julian seemed not to realise that with his own death the enterprise would come to an abrupt end (as indeed it did). Here Julian behaved like the Persian king Sapor who, in 359, during the siege of Amida, was so frustrated at his troops’ lack of success that he actually rushed into the fray himself like an ordinary soldier, the consequence of which was that many of his attendants, who were compelled to accompany him, were killed (19.7.8). From these passages we get a clear indication of how an emperor, or theoretically, any type of leader, who, under normal circumstances, generally behaved appropriately, could, under extreme duress, respond in such a seemingly foolhardy and reckless manner. According to Seager,

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<sup>56</sup> Cf. Boeft (2002) 159. However, Seager (1996) 35 did see that the historian’s disapproval here was beyond doubt.

<sup>57</sup> Boeft (2002) 159.

<sup>58</sup> Here Thompson (1947) 79 applauds the honesty of Ammianus (25.4.18), for although admiring the emperor’s military ability, he criticised Julian’s impulsive and emotional behaviour, his risk-taking and the close association he had with the common soldiers.

Julian's plight was, "ascribed to over-enthusiasm fuelled by anger."<sup>59</sup> This led Ammianus to write that, "(Julian) now hoped for so much from his previously constant good fortune as often to dare things verging on rashness" (24.6.4).

Furthermore, we have a number of instances of the emperor Julian exhibiting anger caused by the conduct of his troops. Interestingly, it was only his favourite, Julian, whom Ammianus recorded as showing direct anger towards his soldiers. Nevertheless, it is easy to surmise that the other emperors did become angry towards their troops, especially at times of crises, such as real or potential mutinies. However, the historian only found it noteworthy to record Julian's anger. Ammianus recorded two instances of Julian exhibiting anger towards his own troops, which were in response to their seeming cowardice. At 24.5.10, the historian wrote that Julian was roused to bitter anger by the apparent fearfulness of his men when the Persians attacked the Roman cohort, *imperator ira gravi permotus*.<sup>60</sup> The consequence for the Roman soldiers was that the angry emperor reduced the surviving members of the group, who were said not to have shown any spirit in resisting the marauders' attack, with loss of rank.

This episode fits in with modern psychological beliefs, such as that anger can be, "the result of disappointment." For clearly Julian felt such disappointment with his men and he expressed his emotion as anger. For anger is "associated with the belief that something can be done to reinstate a goal."<sup>61</sup> Julian's anger was a device used to set an example, by reducing the soldiers' rank, he was sending a clear message to others. Anger was a force for rectifying a wrong, and when wielded by an emperor or a general, was a powerful tool.

At 25.1.8, Ammianus described the anger of Julian towards the cavalry troop of the Tertiarii, which had given way during the battle with the Persians and dampened the ardour of the army, "At this the emperor was roused to righteous indignation, had their standards taken from them and their lances broken, and forced all those who were charged with running away to march with the packs, baggage, and prisoners" (*Unde ad indignationem iustam imperator*

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<sup>59</sup> Seager (1996) 193.

<sup>60</sup> Cf. Hor. *Carm.* 3.3.31, *gravis iras*.

<sup>61</sup> van Dijk & Zeelenberg (2002) 324.

*erectus, ademptis signis hastisque diffractis, omnes eos qui fugisse arguebantur, inter impedimenta et sarcinas et captivos agere iter imposuit*). Both of these instances illustrate the difficulties of persuading Gallic troops to fight against a hostile eastern enemy when clearly emotions were running high and disorder was becoming more and more noticeable. Ammianus did not make a judgement, but his neutral language removed him from directly supporting Julian in an increasingly adverse environment.

Nonetheless, for emperors to lose confidence in their armies suggests that either leadership, loyalty or even discipline was in question, and any form of weakness in authority was something an enemy could quickly pick up on and exploit. Furthermore, this was something that the Romans themselves frequently capitalised on, especially in regards to their barbarian enemies. The removal of a weak leader was an effective means of reducing an army to a scattered mess. Julian was aware of the importance of presenting himself as a strong and effective leader, and put a check on the behaviour of his men for fear that his enemies would take advantage of the situation before order could be restored. The occasions in which he felt anger towards his troops in Persia always resulted in some form of punishment, an effective means for re-establishing discipline throughout the ranks.

The emperor's punishments were frequently swift and severe. For example, when Julian became angry (*concitus ira immani*)<sup>62</sup> after learning that the Persians had attacked three squadrons of the Roman cavalry, and that the standards were not adequately protected, he had the two surviving tribunes cashiered, and ten soldiers who had fled from the field were put to death (24.3.2).<sup>63</sup> From the perspective of the emperor his anger was justified, for his duty was to protect his men and the loss of the standards was an ill omen. However, this can be interpreted as another example of Julian's loss of composure on his Persian expedition, which increased during this campaign.<sup>64</sup> What this reveals then is that

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<sup>62</sup> Cf. Verg. *Aen.* 4.564, *varioque irarum fluctuat aestus*; 9.694, *immani concitus ira*. Cf. AM 24.5.7 and the expression of Julian's rage in Zos. 3.19.2.

<sup>63</sup> Cf. Williams (1997) 68.

<sup>64</sup> Boeft, *et al.* (2002) 72.

Julian's Persian expedition did not decrease his rage, and Ammianus was sometimes not sympathetic towards the emperor, as his choices at this stage seemed to him as becoming more and more irrational, for they involved the influence of powerful emotions.<sup>65</sup>

Further on, at 24.5.7, Ammianus reported that, (*de Iuliano*) *qua causa concitus ira immani*. The emperor was fearfully enraged when missiles rained down on him from a fortress. Here reflective experience had been cognitively assessed by the emperor and beliefs about the enemy led to Julian openly expressing his hostility towards perceived injustice. However, it has been said that this event was inspired purely by an irrational calculation, caused through his emotional reaction.<sup>66</sup> Julian was overly enthusiastic in his approach to the fortress, which he attended with only a small retinue. He was saved from great danger (*evitato magno discrimine*) only through the reactions of his highly trained escort. As a result, Julian resolved to besiege the fortress, possibly on May 21. This particular incident certainly showed that Julian was behaving more and more out of character and was assessing situations badly.<sup>67</sup>

Shortly afterwards, Ammianus recorded that Julian thanked his soldiers for their efforts and promised each man 100 denarii as a reward for their services. However, he was roused to deep indignation (*ad indignationem plenam gravitatis erectus*) when he perceived that the smallness of the sum promised to the troops excited a mutinous uproar (*cum eos parvitate promissi percitus tumultuare sensisset*, 24.3.3). His response was to reproach them in a carefully worded address, promising them booty from the Persians if they continued to follow him and behaved more moderately. He explained that he did not have enough money currently to pay them more as the treasury was exhausted (24.3.4–6). He then stated that if they refused to support him he would die on his feet (*moriar stando*) or else would abdicate — in effect, a threat (24.3.7). The soldiers responded positively to this address and promised to continue following him. In this and other incidents involving the anger of the soldiers, Julian managed to avert a potential mutiny (24.3.8). The soldiers' united anger was a powerful threat to any

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<sup>65</sup> Seager (1996) 193.

<sup>66</sup> Boeft, *et al.* (2002) 161.

<sup>67</sup> Cf. Boeft, *et al.* (2002) 159, 161.



leader, and Julian was fortunate in his ability to quell it with a speech, rather than severe punishments, as at 24.3.2.<sup>68</sup>

### Valens and the Causes of Anger

In the *Res Gestae*, trials for treason were present in the reigns of the emperors Constantius, Valens and Valentinian. According to Ammianus, these were bloodthirsty affairs that he felt utterly repulsed by, and often spared his audience all but the most significant details. Treason was linked to anger, and fits in with these anger determinants from the Introduction, “(2) a sense of betrayal, when there is an acute awareness of disappointment... (4) anxiety, where anger seeks to mask or displace feelings of shame or helplessness... (6) a learnt response to certain situations.”

At 29.1.38, during the trials for magic and treason in Antioch (371–372), Ammianus revealed the bloody consequences of the emperor’s wrath when these trials were in full swing. The threat of treason was something that the Emperor Valens was exceedingly conscious of, as his reaction towards supporters shows. For when Theodorus, a secretary, was charged with aspiring to imperial rank, Valens took out his anger (*effervatus*) on the philosopher Simonides, who had refused to admit his knowledge of this plot beforehand (29.1.8ff). As a consequence of his anger, Valens had the philosopher burnt alive. Ammianus deliberately emphasised the philosopher aspect of Simonides,<sup>69</sup> as opposed to the savagery and non-philosophical nature of Valens, for he used the term *saevus*, indicating fierceness and rage, to describe the ruler’s intense emotional reaction. The historian, with his own philosophic leanings, clearly sought to dehumanise this action of Valens, for he went on in his rhetorical manner to describe the sheer numbers of executions that followed the death of the philosopher, which, “gave the arms of the executioners no rest,” and that, “the whole scene resembled a slaughterhouse” (29.1.39). The description deliberately contrasted the fierce brutality of Valens with the pitiable state of the Antiochenes, who could hardly bear the fearful

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<sup>68</sup> This incident was not mentioned by Zosimus, 3.19.1–2. Cf. Williams (1997) 68 n.70.

<sup>69</sup> Cf. Seager (1986) 25.

sight of the executions without a shudder (*horrore*), and that the air was full of their laments (*questibus*).

Without a doubt, these trials were significant for all in proximity, for a climate of fear ensured that each individual kept a close eye on his neighbour. These circumstances were of great concern for the historian, as he would have had family and friends in the city who might have come under suspicion. As well as this, during these particular trials, it appears that Ammianus was present in the city at the time, and what he described was a firsthand, emotionally embittered account.<sup>70</sup> Further evidence for this is that the historian stated that he would write down what he could remember of events from the confused shadows of his memory (29.1.24). And later described how, “we crept around in Cimmerian gloom” (29.2.4). It was of great consequence for Ammianus to record these instances, and not withhold from unleashing his perception of events, for they had directly impacted upon him.

## PRIMARY RESPONSES TO ANGER FOR THE EMPERORS AND CAESARS

### Summary of Primary Responses

MANIFESTATION OF ANGER	REFERENCE
Gnashing and grinding of the teeth	24.5.6
Verbal abuse	30.6.3
Verbal rebuff	23.2.4
TOTAL 3	

It is understandable that an emperor should refrain from showing any physical display of anger, for it would be beneath his station to do so, — although *ira regia* was on occasion a useful tool. When this physical display of anger was apparent, it then became something that was necessarily remarked upon by the historian.

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<sup>70</sup> Tougher (2000) 99. Cf. Sabbah (2003) 50.

### Gallus and the Primary Responses to Anger

At 14.7.13<sup>71</sup> and 24.5.6 we have two instances of Ammianus' portrayal of imperial figures displaying their anger through the grinding and gnashing of their teeth, something that we are already familiar with from our study of the Roman military and the barbarians. The first instance involved Gallus Caesar, who was portrayed by Ammianus as an insecure young man seething with anger,<sup>72</sup> as well as a bloodthirsty tyrant intent on the destruction of all those who stood in his way.<sup>73</sup> The historian emphasised Gallus' fury when he learnt of the treasonable actions of the quaestor Montius and of the praetorian prefect Domitianus.<sup>74</sup> This was combined with their apparent interference with his troops. Manifesting his rage through the angry grinding of his teeth (*dentium*), he made a speech to his soldiers and incited them to lynch both men (14.7.13).<sup>75</sup> Ammianus presented a picture of the Caesar to his audience as a man who lacked support from all quarters except for his loyal troops and the common people who were easily swayed by his populist actions and entertainments.<sup>76</sup> The decision to have Montius and Domitianus killed reveals that Gallus appeared to have had some awareness of the dangers that threatened him, and, as with most men in his position, required their removal at once. Ironically, this was a similar response to that which Constantius had of him.

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<sup>71</sup> As *dens* in itself is not an anger word, but connotes anger only when used in certain contexts, it cannot be included in our pool of data. However, it is useful for showing the manifestation of anger in Gallus' overt behaviour.

<sup>72</sup> Cf. Blockley (1975) 18.

<sup>73</sup> Cf. Thompson (1943) 302.

<sup>74</sup> Cf. Thompson (1943) 309.

<sup>75</sup> Thompson (1947) 64. Ammianus' condemnation of Domitianus was supported by Philost. 3.28, and Zonaras, 13.9. Although as Thompson (1943) 309 showed, it was actually the *curator urbis* Luscus who motivated the troops to lynch them, and was shortly after put to death, possibly even by Gallus.

<sup>76</sup> On Gallus' sympathy towards the poorer classes, see Thompson (1943) 311.

### Julian and the Primary Responses to Anger

The first physical manifestation of anger from Julian came about as a result of the behaviour of the citizens of the city of Antioch, who had verbally attacked and insulted him for a variety of reasons, not least his physical appearance and his reinstitution of overly indulgent pagan rituals.<sup>77</sup> If Ammianus had sought to write a panegyric on Julian, who combined the elements of *miles* and *græcus* to construct his own selfhood, much as Ammianus did through his closing statement, then surely it ended here. For in Antioch, where all of the emperor's great ideas, such as his desire to restore pagan institutions, decide in legal matters and make reforms in the senate, were mocked and chastised by the very people whom he believed would actively support him. The city of Antioch was, for Julian, a place in which he was confident that his perception of fourth century Hellenism would be readily accepted.<sup>78</sup> For this cosmopolitan city epitomised for him a centre of culture and learning on the scale of Alexandria. Julian's restoration of all things Greek, including culture, worship of the old gods and identification with the city of Antioch, all support this.<sup>79</sup> In reality, Antioch did still retain many of its pagan shrines, and was home to the rhetorician Libanius, whose lectures on the old traditions had certainly made an impact on the young Julian at Nicomedia.<sup>80</sup>

Unfortunately, Antioch also became the city where, as Ammianus revealed, the emperor, who had so far held himself together remarkably well against all the odds, suddenly came undone under pressure from the senate and populace. For Julian was aggrieved when the citizens, as well as the senate, did not accept his reforms wholeheartedly (cf. *Lib. Or.* 15.55; 16.13–14),<sup>81</sup> and even mocked him at the New Year celebrations, something

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<sup>77</sup> For Julian's paganism, see the works of Julian himself. Julian turned from the Christian way (*ὁδός*) to paganism ten years before he gave up the appearance of a publicly practising Christian, *Ep.* 3.434d.

<sup>78</sup> For Julian as, "the restorer of Hellenism," or, "the champion of Hellenism," see Boufartigue (1991) 251–266.

<sup>79</sup> Stoian (1967) 79.

<sup>80</sup> Downey (1939) 306.

<sup>81</sup> E.g. when Julian restored altars in Antioch, the Christian *populus* frequently destroyed them, Julian, *Mis.* 361b; cf. *Lib. Or.* 17.7 for the destruction of altars after Julian's death.

that his ego could not tolerate. As a consequence of this treatment by the Antiochenes, at the outset of his Persian expedition,<sup>82</sup> the young emperor left Antioch in a fury. According to Ammianus, the people of Antioch responded by begging for his glorious return and wished that his anger would abate upon that occasion, (*de Iuliano*) *nondum ira...emollita*. However, Julian manifested his anger through a verbal outburst, claiming that he had no intention of visiting the Antiochenes again (this could also be classed as a secondary response) (23.2.4). The consequence for the people of Antioch was that Julian replaced himself with a cruel governor, one Alexander of Heliopolis, who, he supposedly believed, would keep the greedy and rebellious people of the city in check.<sup>83</sup> His words upon his departure, however, seemed eerily to seal his own fate, for Julian died on his Persian expedition before he had a chance to renounce them.

We are given another account of Julian's anger at 24.5.6, where he was the only emperor described by Ammianus to express his anger through the grinding of his teeth. As if reduced to the figure of a common soldier or a barbarian, Ammianus described the reckless behaviour of Julian, who, after having heard that the Persians had attacked his army, ground his teeth in rage (*unde profectus imperator iratus et frendens*). As discussed above, Julian approached the Persian fortress, foolishly believing that he would not be recognised, and with his escort came too close to the walls. As a consequence he narrowly escaped with his life. Again, this was behaviour not normally associated with the conscientious and right-minded emperor, and the expressing of his anger in such a physical way was out of character. The mere fact that Ammianus mentioned it suggests that he certainly held it as remarkable.

Julian's rashness contributed to his death on 26 June 363, whilst on the Persian campaign. Although no anger word was used by Ammianus in this episode to describe Julian's impulsiveness,

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<sup>82</sup> On Ammianus' narrative of Julian's Persian expedition, see Smith (1999) 89–104.

<sup>83</sup> Libanius (*Ep.* 811) was at first critical of the harsh measures of Alexander, but later sung his praises. Cf. *Or.* 15.74. Pack (1953a) 82 made the suggestion that Ammianus' negative phrasing here may have reflected the attempt by Alexander to enrol the historian in curial service.

which is unusual for this study, this episode serves to highlight the danger in which giving into emotion rather than reason can (sometimes) have for an individual. Ammianus was supposedly conscious of the anger, as well as the reckless and risky behaviour of Julian, and began at 25.3.2 by saying that the emperor was personally going forward to reconnoitre, unarmed. His men then recalled him, by informing him that the Persians had suddenly attacked the rear guard from behind. Caught up in the excitement of this, Julian hastened to aid the rear, but forgot his coat of mail. The emperor, unprotected, rushed about in the battle, careless of his own safety (*cavendi immemor*), where he attempted to rouse his men to angry pursuits (*irasque sequentium*), even though the Persians were already considering a hasty retreat.<sup>84</sup> As the emperor rushed boldly into fight, a cavalryman's spear wounded him fatally (25.3.6). After a few hours the emperor died, leading his men in their anger and grief to attack the Persians more vehemently.

It has been said of this episode that, "Ammianus' account of the Persian invasion of 359 is a very self-consciously literary and literate piece of writing, whose debts to the classical models have been thoroughly illustrated."<sup>85</sup> After all, war was Julian's ultimate purpose and he sought to bring glory to Rome as Alexander had done for the Macedonians, but his successes in the West were not matched by those in the East, and his increasing frustration was felt by Ammianus, whose language remained more and more neutral as he tried his best to refrain from judging him. Ammianus was especially opposed to anger when it came from imperial or other high-ranking figures, and clearly on a number of occasions Julian was going far beyond the bounds of control.

As Seneca suggested, a wise ruler shows anger in moderation (*De ira* 3.14.6). Ammianus (21.16.14) wrote that with their imperial power men in powerful positions should not desire to show their, "cruel and savage and angry impulses" (*nocendi saevienti cupiditate et irascendi*). Those who encouraged moderation in others were praised by Ammianus, but those who encouraged anger were condemned (14.1.10).<sup>86</sup> Behaviourists today record that anger is a tool of authority figures for, "aggressive attacks and threats flow down the

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<sup>84</sup> Bowersock (1978) 116.

<sup>85</sup> Blockley (1988) 247.

<sup>86</sup> Cf. Seager (1986) 34; 28.1.25; 29.3.2.

social rank (from dominant to subordinate) and less commonly up it.” And it is the person who is, “dominant who is more free to express anger and aggression and use it as a means to assert their rank, authority and control.”<sup>87</sup> Julian was subject to this human emotion and though he was a philosopher, still at times gave into his base emotions.

In the end, the death of Julian was coupled with the knowledge that the Persians were ultimately successful, and as we have seen in our look at Sapor, it was frequently the leader who could better control his anger who won the day.

### **Valentinian and the Primary Responses to Anger**

Ammianus appeared to be extremely conscious of the anger of Valentinian, which bubbled just beneath the surface until it was ready to explode. At 27.7.4 Ammianus used a generalisation on the anger of Valentinian<sup>88</sup> in order to bring his own message of morality across to his audience, and of the emperor he writes:

Valentinian was generally known to be a cruel man,<sup>89</sup> but at the beginning of his reign he strove to modify his reputation for harshness by taking some pains to control his savage impulses. But this insidious vice grew on him though its appearance was deferred, and gradually broke out without restraint to the destruction of several persons; it gained strength from his liability to passionate outbursts of anger.<sup>90</sup>

The picture we get of Valentinian was that he was opposed to leniency which was attributed by Ammianus to the emperor's

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<sup>87</sup> Allan & Gilbert (2002) 552.

<sup>88</sup> E.g. at 30.5.3, Ammianus made this generalisation on the temper of Valentinian as he investigated the corruption occurring in Illyricum, *et quamquam terrori cunctis erat, dum sperabatur ut acer et vebemens mox iudices damnari iussurus, quorum perfidia vel secessione Pannoniarum nudatum est latus*. Sulpicius Severus *Dial.* 2.5.5–10, also described the savage temper of Valentinian.

<sup>89</sup> Incidents of Valentinian's cruelty are found at: 27.7.5; 27.7.6; 29.3.3; 29.3.4–6.

<sup>90</sup> Contrast the view of Alföldi (1952) 52, who portrayed Valentinian I as, “puritanical, strict of life, sober and hard.” Cf. Paschoud (1992) 77.

supposed 'savagery'.<sup>91</sup> The historian's characterisation of the emperor came across as far more unbalanced and impulsive than it does in the panegyrics of Valentinian.<sup>92</sup>

Further on, at 30.6.3, Ammianus described the ultimate consequence that this seething anger had for the emperor. He revealed how the Augustus burst into a mighty fit of rage (*imperator, ira vehementi percussus*) at the envoys of the Quadi who were attempting to excuse the behaviour of their countrymen. They had the impetuosity to announce to the emperor that the anger of their country folk had been roused by the Romans' wrongful and untimely attempt to build a fort. As a result, "This brought on a paroxysm of anger in Valentinian, and he began his answer boiling with fury."<sup>93</sup> The emperor's anger was physically manifested in a barrage of abusive language directed squarely at these representatives, as he accused them of being ungracious and forgetting the past favours that the Romans had bestowed upon them. This manifestation of anger was a direct result of the outrage expressed by an emperor who was known to be of an intemperate nature.

Aristotle, in *On the Soul* (1.1), pointed out that the emotions involve bodily changes and that a physicist would be interested in exploring them:

Hence a physicist would define each of these differently from a dialectician; the latter would define anger as an appetite for returning pain for pain or something of the sort, while the former would define it as the boiling of the blood or warm stuff round the heart.

(403a29–b1)<sup>94</sup>

This description by Aristotle fits in with Ammianus' physical description of Valentinian's state of well-being, as well as the angered person's need to express his outrage towards others. Separation from emotion was pertinent, especially when addressing barbarian envoys who were meant to perceive the image, as well as the real-life presence of the emperor, as above all others. When this was diminished it cast doubt on the majesty of the emperor —

<sup>91</sup> Baynes (1953) 169.

<sup>92</sup> Humphries (1999) 122.

<sup>93</sup> On the death of Valentinian, cf. Seager (1999) 598f.

<sup>94</sup> Cf. Knuuttila (2004) 33.



although a display of anger could also be used to create fear and intimidation in the addressee.

## SECONDARY RESPONSES TO ANGER FOR THE EMPERORS AND CAESARS

### Summary of Secondary Responses

SECONDARY RESPONSE	REFERENCE
The action of going to war or attacking an enemy	20.9.2, 24.5.6–7
The action of torturing and killing those suspected of treason	14.5.4, 14.11.23, 14.7.12–13, 26.9.10, 29.1.38, 28.1.11
The punishment of groups	22.13.2, 23.2.4, 31.14.5
The punishment of individuals for not being reliable	20.2.5, 27.7.7, 28.2.9
The punishment of Roman troops	24.3.2, 24.5.10, 25.1.8
The refusal to give into the demands of the enemy	17.10.8
The rejection of the gods	24.6.17
The seeking of revenge	16.11.8
The suppression of aid to those under suspicion	14.11.13
Threats	14.7.2
Trials and inquisitions	19.12.5, 29.1.27
Written attacks	22.14.2–3
<b>TOTAL 25</b>	

When an emperor responded cognitively to the object of his anger, it often involved some type of violence, or at least something that was an equal rebuttal, such as threats or written attacks. Whatever the response was, it frequently needed to be fast and it needed to be decisive, for in order to retain control, especially in regards to the army, a leader had to show that he could make quick decisions, or else his leadership may be called into question. The anger of an emperor needed to be restrained, and this was something that their supporters were well aware of, but when it was unleashed, it

needed to be directed towards a suitable target, in order to offer some satisfaction. However, as the table above shows, the anger of an emperor was often fuelled by open suspicion that resulted in many trials, tortures and executions, in order to discover who a likely traitor was.

### **Constantius and Secondary Responses to Anger**

At many stages in the *Res Gestae* there are instances in which emperors could no longer ignore possible treason. At 19.12.5 Ammianus revealed that Constantius was highly concerned when petitions were sent to him that were meant for the oracle of Besa. Constantius furiously responded to these accounts that were perhaps treasonable and anti-Christian<sup>95</sup> in nature, by seeking out those who were the proponents. He sent Paulus (the Chain) to the Orient to conduct trials that resulted in the cruel punishment of the opponents of Bishop Georgius of Alexandria.<sup>96</sup> The historian recorded a list of several of those who were tried, as well as many who were unnamed, and most of the accused were charged with practising black magic. Of this episode, Ammianus wrote that this was a travesty of justice, where no one, no matter his rank or origin, could escape torture and execution if he were accused.

Trials, if they were conducted legitimately, were necessary for the defence of the empire and were thus agreeable to Ammianus. However, when they were too close to home for comfort, and when those who conducted the trials appeared to be taking pleasure in them, then this was unacceptable, for, “it is not decent to give way to unbridled joy at such unhappy events; it makes men seem the subjects of despotism rather than of lawful authority” (19.12.17). Ammianus noted the wisdom of Cicero, “we should imitate Cicero, who said himself that when it was in his power to spare or to harm he looked for an excuse to pardon rather than punish; that is the mark of a dispassionate and prudent judge” (19.12.18). In this Ammianus was clearly implicating Constantius,

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<sup>95</sup> On Constantius as a Christian emperor, see Hunt (1985) 186–200. Indeed, asking the god about one’s own future prospects was something that was severely dealt with in the Late Roman Empire, Matthews (1989) 218. Jones (1964) 113.

<sup>96</sup> For the background of Paulus, as well as the chronology of the death of Georgius, see Chapter 5.

as well as Paulus, for he emphasised the cruelty of the emperor by writing that, “in such circumstances (he) never allowed loyal service to atone for a fault or a mistake” (19.12.9). In the obituary of Constantius (21.16.9) Ammianus stated that as a response to his suspicions, and driven by fear, Constantius gave himself up to inquisitions with more eagerness than humanity, and also appointed merciless judges.

### Julian and Secondary Responses to Anger

An attribution of anger against a perceived injustice was attested to by Ammianus in 363 (22.14.2) during a corn-crisis (a similar crisis occurred eight years earlier under Gallus, 14.7.1ff). Ammianus reported that Julian raged (*saeviens*) against the senate at Antioch when it was pointed out that he could not lower the price of commodities at that time. The measures that Julian was trying to introduce were seen to be a direct attack upon the upper classes, and perhaps not surprisingly, Ammianus portrayed Julian’s policy as superfluous, and a means to increase his popularity (*popularitatis amor*). This was something he had not earned since entering Antioch. It appears that the historian interpreted the emperor’s anger as unjustified, for he never once mentioned Julian’s own economic accounts of the food supply, which Julian included in his *Misopogon*, though surely the historian would have read it.<sup>97</sup> Ammianus also did not acknowledge the failure of the rains leading to a bad harvest, which would have contributed significantly to this crisis, and which Julian’s *Misopogon* (359A) also referred to.<sup>98</sup> That these measures would have created financial hardship, if not for Ammianus, then at least for people he knew, especially within the curial class, must have influenced his decision in showing that this manoeuvre was purely to gain popularity for the emperor, as well as to distract from Julian’s Persian campaign, which undoubtedly would have diverted much of the food resources in preparations for the military activity.<sup>99</sup> Julian, however, was convinced that

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<sup>97</sup> Cf. Matthews (1989) 409ff.

<sup>98</sup> Cf. Matthews (1989) 110.

<sup>99</sup> Julian’s enthusiasm for reforming the curial class was recorded and sometimes criticised, A.M. 22.9.12; 25.4.21; Zos. 3.11.5; Lib. Or. 18.135–158; *Ep.* 699; *Co. Theor.* 12.1.50–56. See also Pack (1986) 224–259.

supplies were still plentiful and prices were high because members of the upper classes were deliberately keeping back food from the people in order to raise prices (*Mis.* 368D).

As a consequence of his anger towards his dissenters, Julian chose the rather extraordinary response of dressing down the Antiochenes through the writing of his *Misopogon* or *Beard-Hater*,<sup>100</sup> composed during the celebration of the Kalends in late January or early February 363.<sup>101</sup> This was put on display outside the imperial palace for the public to read.<sup>102</sup> The *Misopogon* was a lengthy treatise that has been described as, “an expression of the bitterest disappointment and rage,”<sup>103</sup> and, “a work which might have been witty, but the bitterness of its angry and sensitive author overwhelmed his efforts at humour.”<sup>104</sup> Undisguised anger populated the end of the *Misopogon*.<sup>105</sup> And of this document Ammianus wrote that Julian, “enumerated the defects of the city in no friendly terms and, in some respects, went beyond the truth.” As a consequence the Antiochenes, “retaliated by circulating a number of jests at his expense which for the moment he had to pretend to take in good part, though in fact he was boiling with suppressed wrath (*ira sufflabatur interna*)” (22.14.2).<sup>106</sup>

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<sup>100</sup> “Julian’s idiosyncratic satire or, as Ammianus asserts, invective is a composition *sui generis*. If the author wanted his Antiochicus or ‘Beard-Hater’ to testify to his superior irony, his wrath precluded all subtleties, although friend and foe admitted the literary merit of the satire alike, cf. Zos. 3.11.5, Sozom. *Hist. Eccl.* 5.19.3,” Boeft & Bremmer (1995) 240. Gleason (1986) 106–119.

<sup>101</sup> Gleason (1986) 108. For Ammianus’ erroneous dating of the *Misopogon*, see Barnes (1998) 51–52.

<sup>102</sup> Barnes (1998) 51.

<sup>103</sup> Downey (1939) 309.

<sup>104</sup> Bowersock (1978) 13. Cf. Newbold (2002) 50.

<sup>105</sup> (e.g. 360D–361D, 364Bff. 366B–D).

<sup>106</sup> “In four of the instances in Ammianus of *sufflare* it concerns human pride (cf. OLD s.v. 1c); 15.5.37, 17.4.12 (q.v.), 18.6.1, 28.4.12; it is used metaphorically in a similar sense in 22.16.12 (q.v.) about pretentious temples. In 26.1.3 some people are *spe vana sufflati*. The present text is the only case where the passage means “swell with rage” (OLD s.v. 1b). Obviously the Antiochenes had hit the mark,” Boeft & Bremmer (1995) 242.

Although, as we discussed in the introduction, anger control in the fourth century was no longer prominent in political texts, Ammianus did make much of Julian concealing his wrath, for although the populace caricatured Julian, comparing him to a dwarf and a goat (due to his characteristic beard), and openly objected to the number of sacrifices he made to the gods, the emperor, “held his peace, kept his temper under control, and went on with his solemnities” (22.14.3). Individuals react differently when placed in the public eye and when emotions get the better of them. Some behaved like the emperor Tiberius who, unable to cope with the constant pressure from the senate in particular, took to self-imposed exile. Others, such as Nero, took public life to the extreme, and deliberately presented themselves to the populace, lavishing all the attention, even though he opened himself up to outside criticism. For Julian, neither was a suitable option, and his anger led him to react as only a man of his scholarly nature could, which was through the writing of a piece of literature meant to explain his position and which emphasised the extent to which the citizens were a disappointment to him. Rage (*saeviens*) permeated the text, and this was obvious to our historian.

For Julian to be made the object of ridicule was the ultimate insult. However, Ammianus did justify some of the Antiochenes’ jibes (at 14.2–3 and 22.12.4),<sup>107</sup> and believed that his objections were more punitive than he thought warranted, *Probra civitatis infensa mente dinumerans, addensque veritati complura* (22.14.2). The historian did not criticise Julian for the dissertation, which suggests that he perhaps believed that the Antiocheans were being unduly harsh towards the emperor. He did, however, point out Julian’s unwarranted behaviour on other occasions, which he clearly disapproved of. For example, when Julian excitedly ran out of the senate in Constantinople to greet Maximus (22.7.3), or when Julian carried the sacred standards, rather than letting the priests, for whom it was their sacred duty (22.14.3).

Interestingly, Sozomen, the fifth-century Christian historian, was in support of the dissertation, and wrote of Julian, “he suppressed his feelings of indignation and repaid their ridicule by words alone; he composed and sent to them a most excellent and

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<sup>107</sup> Cf. Thompson (1947) 2; Newbold (2002) 40.

elegant work under the title of *Beard Hater*” (*Hist. Eccl.* 5.19). Zosimus, the pagan historian who lived a short time after Julian, called it a, “most polished composition” (3.11.5). The second century Roman rhetorician Fronto was also in support of such devices. Fronto believed that emperors ought to, “repress by their edicts the faults of provincials, give praise to good actions, quell the seditious and terrify the fierce ones. All these are assuredly things to be achieved by words and letters.” (*Ep. ad Marv. Ant.* 2.7). Libanius, in his *Epistles*, never once mentioned the *Misopogon* definitively. Although he did, in his sixteenth oration, attempt to argue against the dissertation in stages.<sup>108</sup>

To summarise, anger felt towards individuals from an imperial personage was perhaps the most terrifying thing anyone in Ammianus’ time could be subjected to. An emperor had ultimate power over life and death and, if offence was given, deliberately or otherwise, no one was free from becoming the next target of the emperors’ wrath. As we have seen in Constantius’ reaction towards Gallus, not even blood could secure one’s favour with the emperor. Julian’s reaction to the behaviour of the people of Antioch could have been far more severe, but, as it was, he did not punish anyone directly and chose instead to focus his attention onto his Persian campaign, installing a severe governor to control the populace in his place. Surely this was a sign of his highly developed sensitivities, as well as the ability to restrain his anger against the majority who would judge him even more harshly if he used open and active reprisals.

The struggle to retain power and keep up an appearance of stateliness and serenity in all matters was certainly taxing on the emperors, especially those who had been acclaimed on the field and knew nothing but the engagements of warfare and life as a common soldier. Out of those who were acclaimed by the soldiery, it was only Julian who had the intensive classical education that so interested Ammianus. Even though Julian had the potential to be a great statesman, it was perhaps his disillusionment at his reception in Antioch which saw him desire more and more to prove himself on the field in the conquest of the Persian nation. The fact that Ammianus related so many instances of Julian’s anger was in accordance with the anger of Valentinian, for as pointed out, both

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<sup>108</sup> Cf. Harris (2001) 258; Julian. *Ep.* 82.

rulers became hostile towards threats against their imperial *maiestas*.<sup>109</sup> Aristotle (*Rh.* 2.4.1382a1–2) agreed with this view of hostility and saw anger as one of the three primary causes of enmity. He proceeded (*Rh.* 2.4.1382a8) to point out that enmity differs from anger in that the object of anger is to cause pain to another, whilst that of hatred is to inflict harm.

**CONSEQUENCES OF ANGER  
FOR THE EMPERORS AND CAESARS**

**Summary of the Consequences for Selves and Others**

CONSEQUENCE FOR SELVES	REFERENCE
Danger from becoming a usurper	20.4.15
Death	30.6.3
Near loss of life	24.5.6–7
Success over an enemy	24.5.10
Consequence for Others	Reference
Executions	14.7.2, 14.7.12, 14.11.23, 26.9.10, 27.7.7, 29.1.38
Pressure on individuals	16.8.7, 17.10.8
Quelling of mutinies	24.3.3
Rewards	14.7.4
Success in forcing their demands	20.4.15
The closure of places of worship	22.13.2
The punishment of groups and individuals	14.11.13, 20.2.5, 23.2.4, 24.3.2, 24.5.10, 25.1.8, 28.1.23, 28.2.9, 31.14.5
The refusal of support	20.9.2
Trials and inquisitions	14.5.4, 19.12.5, 29.1.27, 28.1.11
TOTAL 30	

From the table above we can ascertain that there are a number of possible consequences when an emperor becomes angry, and, for the most part, it affected others, rather than themselves. Just as

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<sup>109</sup> Brandt (1999) 169.

with the table that lists secondary responses, the consequences often had far reaching effects, and the emperors often only found resolution to their anger when individuals or groups were punished in some form or another. This explains why execution has the highest number of references, for capital punishment was the surest means of removing individual threats forever. Ammianus' descriptions of anger were all the more menacing, for the likelihood of rigorous punishment by an emperor or Caesar was very high. Even Julian was prone to outbreaks of wrath so severe that he had some of his own troops executed. The consequences for others far outweighed the consequences for themselves, and Ammianus perhaps highlighted this in order to give a greater depth of sorrow and despair to his account when these imperial figures could no longer refrain from giving into their rage.

### Gallus and the Consequences of Anger

In the table above we are given six references to executions that came about as the consequence of the emperors' anger. For the most part, these executions were the result of feelings of outrage on behalf of the emperor or Caesar towards a person or persons they saw as being a threat or insulting their position. Aristotle (*Rh.* 2.2.1379a29–32) maintained that individuals often become angry with people who laugh or scorn or mock us, as they are exhibiting insolence towards us. This insult then stimulates anger. This is in accordance with modern psychological analysis. For the relationship between anger and insult has been widely studied. Indeed, “anger often generates approach-related action tendencies that are generally aimed at resolving the anger-producing event. In the case of an insult, the action tendency may be aggression.”<sup>110</sup>

Gallus' actions, which aroused anger in the emperor Constantius, would have a fatal consequence for the Caesar. For example at 14.7.2, Ammianus reported that Gallus became so enraged by an unwisely blunt answer (*gravius rationabili responderunt*) when he desired to freeze prices at the time of a famine, that he ordered the entire senate of Antioch to be executed.<sup>111</sup> Ammianus

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<sup>110</sup> Harmon-Jones (2004) 60.

<sup>111</sup> His brother Julian was also impeded by the Antiochean senate, but took a far more mild approach, “like his brother Gallus, but not thirsty for blood,” 20.4.1–3. Cf. Blockley (1975) 2. The members of the



recorded that Honoratus, the count of the East (cf. Lib. *Ep.* 386), determinedly opposed this decision of the Caesar through his firm resolution (*fixa constantia*), and set the men free. That Gallus had the desire to make this writ made him appear to be a very dangerous individual, whether this was an exaggeration or not, it was enough to show that he had a quick temper and that his judgement was not always sound.

This description also reveals much about our historian, for Ammianus was extremely prejudiced against Gallus,<sup>112</sup> and wrote of these outrages being committed by the Caesar in Antioch (14.1.1),<sup>113</sup> which he introduced as, “the gusts of raging fortune” (*fortunae saevientis...tempestates*).<sup>114</sup> Ammianus’ bias comes through strongly here, as it involved this social order. Most scholars agree that Ammianus was a member of the propertied curial class, and consequently was extremely conscious of decisions that could infringe upon this group, such as increases in taxation or other burdens placed upon them (e.g. 16.5.13–15).<sup>115</sup> When it came to

Antiochean senate were large landowners, and therefore controlled food prices in the city, thus they had a vested interest here, cf. Thompson (1943) 307. Cf. Lib. *Ep.* 386.

<sup>112</sup> Thompson (1943) 302–315. Cf. Alföldi (1952) 4.

<sup>113</sup> It is possible that Ammianus, or his sources, saw Gallus during the trials conducted by Ursicinus, and that this adversely affected his portrayal of the Caesar, cf. Thompson (1947) 69.

<sup>114</sup> In his descriptions of the Caesar, Blockley (1975) 18 stated, “Ammianus...characterises Gallus as a cruel and angry tyrant.” However, it is possible that Ammianus’ views on Gallus were directed by the same disinformation that Constantius received and so may have, “reinforced the historian’s prejudice against the Caesar,” Thompson (1947) 70. Gallus and his wife Constantina were renowned for their ferocity, and Constantina was said to have constantly aroused the savagery of Gallus, (*Galli Caesaris*) *saevientis*, 14.1.2, which was something that even his half-brother Julian (*Ep. ad Ath.* 271d) admitted.

<sup>115</sup> Ammianus was extremely class conscious, see Thompson (1942) 130–134. Ammianus’ verdict was harshest against those emperors who put restrictions upon the *curiales*. However, this did not extend to Constantius, who actually granted this class concessions, especially in regards to the Church, see Jones (1964) 119.

supporting governmental decisions, it was the regulations imposed by those in authority that determined whether or not he supported a particular policy, and, “He explicitly takes sides with the *curiales* of Antioch against the Caesar Gallus” (14.7.2). In this way, his deep concern for the wellbeing of the *curiales* reflected his conservative outlook.<sup>116</sup> Through his rhetorical approach, Ammianus was able to bypass the revelation that the Caesar was trying to assist the hungry masses, by assuming that Gallus was instead instituting a reign of terror in the eastern city.<sup>117</sup> It can consequently be seen that his reasons for portraying Gallus as such a ruthless tyrant were likely the result of the Caesar’s support of the lower classes, a disposition that Ammianus was at times thoroughly against.<sup>118</sup>

From punishment we now move on to rewards, and when an individual did something that was perceived beneficial for an imperial figure, sometimes the rewards were great. For example, when Constantina, the wife of Gallus, was given information about a conspiracy by a female informant, she rewarded the woman greatly (14.7.4). Here, Ammianus deliberately implied Gallus’ anger (*accenderat super his incitatum propositum ad nocendum*), which added to the vileness of this episode, where those who were low-born were treated royally — something that Ammianus would naturally abhor. Ammianus described this incident at 14.7 where he also listed all of Gallus’ crimes against humanity, from his interest in gladiatorial shows to indiscriminate accusations against many for the creation of a secret royal robe. It is clear that the historian was trying to blacken the character of Gallus, through implying that he paid attention to anyone who cared to make an allegation. The whole episode was made a laughable matter, from the unknown woman, to the soldiers of the lowest rank accused of conspiring against the Caesar, and who clearly had no sort of power to be able to commit such a deed. This was perhaps idle rumour in any case, and the fact

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<sup>116</sup> Momigliano (1977) 133.

<sup>117</sup> This was shown to extend to all the Eastern provinces, cf. Thompson (1943) 314.

<sup>118</sup> Cf. Thompson (1943) 312. See also Chapter 4, where Ammianus himself presented a reprieve of the lower orders that were at times unrestrainedly oppressed by the elite orders, something which the historian also strongly disapproved of.

that Constantina<sup>119</sup> so richly rewarded the woman and paraded her in front of the palace was also a piece for amusement, for surely no one who was an informer would want to be made known in such an obvious manner.<sup>120</sup> Ammianus here demonstrated that Gallus was as suspicious of treason as Constantius was, perhaps even more so, for he coveted his position highly and destroyed many people in his short career as Caesar. Moreover, Ammianus sought to make a generalisation similar to those made in regards to Constantius, Valens and Valentinian,<sup>121</sup> and this in fact proceeded to a wider comment about the unsatisfactory state of society in this period.

The degradation of Gallus and the depravity of his rule were symbolic of the condition of the empire before the emperor Theodosius ruled — although this may simply be a consequence of the flattery of the current ruler. Theodosius was a devout Christian, and thus it has been noted that in the last six books of the *Res Gestae*, written during the early 390s, that Ammianus had to restrain his pagan sympathies to comply with the emperor's attitudes. Also, Ammianus was forced to stop his history of the West with the year 375, as he could not include the trial and execution of the emperor's father, a theme that could not be handled objectively.<sup>122</sup>

Before Constantius had the Caesar executed for his actions in Antioch, Gallus had another two men killed by the hands of his own soldiers, again as a consequence of his anger. The first was a quaestor named Montius, who warned Gallus about giving in to

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<sup>119</sup> She was the widow of Hannibalianus.

<sup>120</sup> Cf. Thompson (1943) 303.

<sup>121</sup> For example, Ammianus increased his audience's perceptions of the villainous character of the emperor, simply by stating that his mind recoiled from recording all examples of Valentinian's cruelty, the suggestion thus being that there were far more instances than he would ever have a chance to reveal, 29.3.9. Cruelty and anger were often intertwined in Ammianus' rhetorical descriptions of Valentinian. See 29.4.7 — the burning alive of Hortarius for treachery to the Roman government while holding an army command under Valentinian. Cf. Thompson (1947) 91. Ammianus' portrayals were carefully construed to create the maximum impact for his audience.

<sup>122</sup> Thompson (1947) 86, 94, 111f.

extremes, for it would see retribution from Constantius. The second was Domitianus, who had spoken to Gallus arrogantly, refused to meet with him and threatened to cut off his supplies.<sup>123</sup> Domitianus had also sent false reports to Constantius that the Caesar may or may not have known about (14.7.10). The language that Ammianus used to describe the deaths of Montius and Domitianus was carefully moulded in order to invoke pity in his audience, and thus blacken the name of Gallus even further, for Montius was a, “frail and ailing old man,” and their deaths were gruesomely described. Ammianus also recorded that the executions of Montius and Domitianus were seen as grounds for high treason, and as a result, the Caesar was recalled on Constantius’ orders and was himself executed, a consequence of the Augustus’ own anger (14.11.19–21, 23).<sup>124</sup>

It has been said that it was Constantius’ suspicious nature that let him be, “consistently misinformed about Gallus.”<sup>125</sup> Even with the reprieve that Thompson offered,<sup>126</sup> the name of Gallus still

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<sup>123</sup> Cf. Matthews (1989) 34.

<sup>124</sup> For the date of Gallus’ execution, in October 354, rather than in November or December, see Barnes (1989b) 416. As Gallus was the half-brother of Julian, Ammianus could not forgive Constantius his actions, cf. Barnes (1998) 130. See especially the *Letter to the Athenians* 270c–71a, 272a–d by Julian, Blockley (1975) 20. Immoderate, 14.1.1; foolish, 11.11 and 26; unjust, 1.3; afraid, 11.21. (21), “Of the four tyrannical vices mentioned by Eutropius, Ammianus ascribes three of them to Gallus, anger, cruelty and greed.” Anger and cruelty: 14.1.1.4–5 and 10; 7.3; 9.9. Greed: 14.1.4.

<sup>125</sup> Thompson (1947) 69. Informers on Gallus included Thalassius, 14.7.9; Domitianus, 14.7.10; Barbatio, 14.11.24; *et al.* Thalassius deliberately roused Gallus to fury by opposing and reproving him, *Thalassius...ad rabiem...evibrabat (Gallus Caesarem)*, 14.1.10. Gallus’ anger was further incited when he discovered that Thalassius was reporting his actions to the emperor, see Mooney (1958) 176.

<sup>126</sup> Although by no means whitewashing the name of Gallus, Thompson (1947) 68 suggested that the condemnation was largely unjustified. When the Caesar was executed under the orders of Constantius, Blockley (1994) 58 in opposition to Thompson, stated that Gallus, “thoroughly deserved his fate.” Indeed, thirty years earlier this construction, as presented by Blockley, had been quite thoroughly

carried with it the weight of the heinous crimes he committed.<sup>127</sup> However, Gallus had his supporters. These included the Arian scholar Philostorgius, the pagan Zosimus, and Gallus' half-brother Julian.<sup>128</sup> Nevertheless, it is possible that Constantius was right to be concerned about the Caesar, for Gallus was conducting trials in Antioch which were perhaps leading him to enquiries regarding the intelligence activities of Constantius' own secret agents in the region.<sup>129</sup> Also, it appears that the Caesar did not expect his execution, and began his return journey to the emperor in the belief that he could expect leniency from Constantius, as upon his accession as Caesar he had made a pledge of loyalty to the emperor (Philost. *Hist. Eccl.* 4.1).

With the death of Gallus, executions by no means stopped here, for they were essential in this period for providing order and protecting those in power. Ammianus was certainly not sympathetic to Gallus when he died, and in this and other cases, his language remained neutral, for this was the order of the day.

### Valentinian and the Consequences of Anger

The consequence of anger for an emperor which is perhaps most memorable in the whole of the *Res Gestae*, is the death of Valentinian at Brigetio on November 17, 375 (30.6.3).<sup>130</sup> When the envoys of the German Quadi at Brigetio on the Pannonian Danube<sup>131</sup> were, without success, trying to excuse their countrymen's actions without a sense of remorse, in a fit of rage, the emperor loudly accused the, "whole nation of ingratitude and

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challenged, beginning with Thompson (1943) 302–315. See also Mooney (1958) 175–177.

<sup>127</sup> Cf. the refutation of Thompson's thesis of Gallus' self-martyrdom by Mooney (1958) 175–177.

<sup>128</sup> Cf. Thompson (1943) 302, who related the names of other notable sources who supported, as well as those, in particular Christians (Gallus was an Arian, so naturally Arians would write more highly of him), who condemned Gallus.

<sup>129</sup> For the secret service in late Roman antiquity, see Sinnigen (1959) 238–254.

<sup>130</sup> Frank (1972) 76.

<sup>131</sup> Wilkes (1972) 382.

forgetfulness of past favours" (*nationem omnem ut beneficiorum immemorem et ingratham*). For all his faults, in this instance, Valentinian was for all intents and purposes justified in his anger. This was because the Quadi, an inferior people and subjected to Roman autonomy, were, in their arrogance, convinced that they were in the right, as the Romans had built a barrier in their territory. However, from the emperor's perspective, the Quadi were transgressing his sense of justice in that they had attacked Romans whilst performing their duty.

As Aristotle stated in the *Rhetoric*, an individual in a position much like Valentinian's expected deference from his subordinates on account of his superiority, and was especially likely to become angry if a slight was suffered instead (2.2.1378b34–1379a6). This insubordination was something that Valentinian, in his superior position, simply could not tolerate. Compare also Aristotle's attitude towards slaves. Slaves, as inferiors, were in no position to feel anger against their masters, but had to appease their masters' anger (*Rh.* 2.3.1380a15–18).

Furthermore, Ammianus wrote that shortly after this outburst, the emperor quietened and appeared to listen to the envoys, but his earlier outburst had already led to his apoplectic fit, a possible cerebral haemorrhage resulting in a fatal stroke (30.6.3).<sup>132</sup> He was taken into an inner chamber — where lesser men could not see him — and died a few hours later at the age of fifty-five, after a rule of almost twelve years (30.6.6). This whole incident reveals that even an emperor could not escape the effects of his own wrath, and the historian must have seen this as a bittersweet conclusion to his eventful reign. Even Alföldi, who defended Valentinian in his 1952 study, said, "That Valentinian was, by nature passionate is beyond all doubt,<sup>133</sup> however much he tried to control himself."<sup>134</sup>

Only Valentinian died in such a manner, and perhaps this was a warning to other imperial figures not to follow the path of anger. If anything, Ammianus despised Valentinian as much for his anger and his consequent lack of restraint, as he did for the cruelty, greed

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<sup>132</sup> Cf. Humphries (1999) 122.

<sup>133</sup> 30.5.3, *acer et vehemens*. See also, Cic. *ad Brut.* 1.10.1; Cic. *Caecin* 28: Suet *Inl* 9.1.

<sup>134</sup> Alföldi (1952) 42.

and timidity, which he highlighted in his obituary (30.8). Ammianus emphasised these traits when he made it seem as though Valentinian was dealing out punishments indiscriminately. For example, Valentinian allegedly ordered the cruel deaths of certain officials, who were implicated by those who desired their downfall (27.7.5), even though only five were apparently killed.<sup>135</sup> The picture here is very vague and distorted and lacks depth, just as most examples of the supposed cruelty of Valentinian do. Nevertheless, Ammianus portrayed the supposed violence of Valentinian so successfully that one modern scholar described Valentinian’s anger as, “ungovernable.”<sup>136</sup>

COMMENTS BY AMMIANUS

Summary of Comments by Ammianus

COMMENT	REFERENCE
Cruelty	14.7.2, 29.1.27, 31.14.5
Influence of flatterers	14.5.4
Irony	23.2.4, 24.6.17
Lack of justice	19.12.5, 26.9.10
Outrageous behaviour	14.1.10
Rumours	22.13.2
TOTAL 10	

One can immediately see from the table above that Ammianus made more comments in regards to the anger of Emperors and Caesars than he did for the Roman military, the Persians and the barbarians. After all, this reflected the higher importance placed on anger and imperial figures, as it was something that concerned him greatly. This aspect gave Ammianus room to moralise on certain situations, which to him seemed greatly out of order, for none of the comments were positive ones. He was particularly concerned when emperors exhibited their anger through displays of cruelty, for this went against his sense of ethics and the traditional Roman

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<sup>135</sup> Paschoud (1992) 77.

<sup>136</sup> Seager (1986) 34; 27.7.4, 30.5.10. 8.12. However, as Paschoud (1992) 77 stated, “The cruelty of Valentinian is affirmed, not proven.”

values which he adhered to (and altered to suit his own perspective). In that respect, emphasising cruelty in emperors revealed how much they were removed from the traditional sense of *clementia* that the emperors were ideally meant to show.<sup>137</sup> Perhaps though, Ammianus refrained from making comments for political reasons, and it was understandable that he made few comments on the anger of Julian, for then it would seem that he was putting his hero down further, and this was something he simply could not countenance. In saying this however, then why did he not make more comments on the anger of other imperial figures that he disliked? The answer is probably the same for the lack of comments on the anger of the groups which we have looked at previously, for he only commented on those episodes which were deemed worthy, for he did not wish to fill his pages with excessive comment — and it would become tiresome to comment on every episode.

### **Ammianus' Comments on the Anger of Julian**

There are two instances above listed under 'irony', for here Ammianus gave us comments upon the emperor Julian's anger, which foreshadowed his death (i.e. dramatic irony), and the manner of his language and hindsight were given over to this paradox. As such, the first incident in which he mentioned Julian's oncoming death occurred at the time Julian stormed out of Antioch, furious

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<sup>137</sup> These "barbaric explosions" resulting in displays of cruelty by the emperors were discussed by MacMullen (1964) 452. For emperors exhibiting *clementia*, see for example Constantius' praise of himself in his dealings with the barbarians along the Danube, 17.11.28ff. Often Ammianus held back on his comments, and appeared to remain neutral; this has led some to see him as an impartial judge. Thus Gibbon (1994) wrote, "The impartial Ammianus deserves all our confidence." Of this supposed objectivity Harris (2001) 261 wrote of Ammianus that, "His reputation for reliability gains somewhat from the fact that in spite of his high opinion of Julian he neither credits him with uniform good temper nor omits particular instances of his anger; he limits himself to saying that Julian treated very gently some who plotted against him and punished them with inborn mildness." E.g. Julian being angry: 22.13.2, 24.5.10; reaction to plotters: 25.4.9.



at the citizens and their jibes<sup>138</sup> against him,<sup>139</sup> and promised never to return (on 5 March, 363, 23.2.4).<sup>140</sup> He then promised the delegates who escorted him from the city that he would spend the winter at Tarsus. Ammianus told his readers that he did, but as a corpse rather than in the way Julian intended.<sup>141</sup> However much Ammianus idealised this Augustus, he was aware of the increasing anger residing in the heart of Julian, which also came through in his next bitter episode. This occurred when Julian intended to sacrifice ten bulls to Mars the Avenger, however nine collapsed before they reached the altar and the tenth escaped. With great indignation (*indignatus*) Julian swore by Jupiter that he would never sacrifice to Mars again (24.6.17). What Julian experienced has been studied by sociologists, for it has been recorded that indignation builds upon other emotions, such as anger, and is directed towards a target.<sup>142</sup> In Julian's case, this was the god Mars.

From this statement, the contemporary reader or listener, who was already aware of how Julian died, would see that omens remained important as harbingers of doom. Prior to Julian's death in 363 Ammianus recorded many portents of his doom at 25.2,

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<sup>138</sup> Compare the reaction of Constantius, who enjoyed the popular jokes made at his expense whilst attending the chariot races in Rome, 16.10.13. Also his decision to ignore the treatment of one of his statues at Edessa, when the citizens, "resenting some treatment they had received," thrashed its bronze backside. According to Libanius *Or.* 20.25, when Valens was publicly ridiculed in Constantinople, he held no grudge against them. Here, however, Libanius was writing for the benefit of Theodosius, to quell his rage against the public after the Riot of the Statues. Ammianus' account was very different, 26.10.12. Cf. Gleason (1986) 114f.

<sup>139</sup> On Julian's religious and economic policies which led to the hostility between Julian and the *populus* of Antioch, see Downey (1939) 303–315; (1951) 312–321.

<sup>140</sup> On the exit of Julian from Antioch, see Lib. *Or.* 16.35. Also Seager (1986) 20.

<sup>141</sup> On the death of Julian, cf. Lib. *Or.* 18.274, *Or.* 24. On the puzzling indication by Ammianus on the absence of the *scutarii* at Julian's death, see Woods (1997) 279. Indeed this was an omen of his imminent death, see Seager (1986) 34.

<sup>142</sup> Jasper (1998) 406.

including a shooting star that Julian fearfully took to be the god Mars appearing to him.<sup>143</sup> Surprisingly Julian, a devout pagan, chose to ignore these. The rejection of Mars was an astonishing reaction, for Mars was traditionally responsible for bringing success in war. Being deeply superstitious, the knowledge that a bitter end might occur for him may have begun to play on his mind, but he rejected it on the surface (cf. 25.2.4). However, Ammianus (25.4.17) described Julian as, “superstitious rather than genuinely observant of the rites of religion” (*superstitiosus magis quam sacrorum legitimus observator*). According to Libanius (*Or.* 18.306), Julian’s interest in divination on this campaign centred purely on one question, whether he would do harm to the Persians, and when the answer was in the negative, Julian responded by rejecting a part of his faith.<sup>144</sup> In his language, Ammianus did not show support for Julian’s behaviour, partly because being a, “more conservative pagan,”<sup>145</sup> he was censorious of the emperor’s exorbitant sacrifices (22.5.2, 22.12.6). Ammianus was opposed to Julian’s excesses in both superstition and sacrifices. At 25.4.17 he compared the emperor to both Hadrian and Marcus Aurelius, who shared the same traits. Libanius (*Or.* 12.80) also criticised the numbers of Julian’s blood sacrifices. Marcus Aurelius, whom Julian sought to emulate, also made excessive sacrifices, which were criticised by the *populus* (25.17).

Nevertheless, it was a sign of impiety to become angry towards the gods, and when Julian, *exclamavit indignatus*, and swore to reject Mars, this was an element of hubris that no conscientious pagan could morally support. Julian ultimately died from a spear thrown during a battle with the Persians. Surely by rejecting the very god who should have protected him, this was the ultimate twist of fate for an emperor who sought to bring back the traditional religions in this period of burgeoning Christianity.<sup>146</sup>

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<sup>143</sup> For a complete list of the omens portending Julian’s demise, see Smith (1999) 100ff. Cf. Conduche (1965) 370.

<sup>144</sup> Cf. Seager (1997) 265. Revenge was one of Julian’s motives for the Persian campaign, 23.5.18. Cf. Boeft (2002) 197.

<sup>145</sup> Gleason (1986) 114.

<sup>146</sup> On the resistance to Julian’s religious reforms in the military, see Woods (1997) 283f.

### **Ammianus' Comments on the Anger of Constantius**

Ammianus wrote very critically of the sycophants who crowded Constantius' court. This was especially so when they incited his already harsh and irritable temper (*iracundae*) through exciting his suspicions (14.5.4).<sup>147</sup> Although Constantius was subject to uncertainties, it was these flatterers who exaggerated matters and openly engaged his hostility to such an extent that no one, no matter their position, was safe from their malicious gossip.<sup>148</sup> This led Ammianus to make the comment that Constantius was, "prone in any case to entertain baseless suspicions." Moreover, Constantius seemed to be a very poor judge of character, for in Ammianus' opinion he allowed the worst possible people to guide him, such as Paulus "the Chain," who, whilst investigating the usurpation of Magnentius, "stitched together a patchwork of charges far removed from the truth" (14.5.6).<sup>149</sup> Constantius supported these actions, for he perhaps believed that if a climate of fear ensued after many were harmed and suppressed in trials and inquisitions, then his position would remain more secure. In the end, Constantius died in bed of natural causes, so perhaps his mistrust was not really a fault.

### **CONCLUSION**

Ammianus was a concerned moralist and his judgements and prejudices shaped and formed his accounts of all five imperial figures discussed in this chapter. A thoroughgoing conservative and one who favoured moderation (29.2.19), the historian did accept, "ruthlessness and cruelty as inevitable."<sup>150</sup> His language often took a neutral and matter of fact tone in which he simply presented details without making a judgement. In this period of increasing pressure on the empire, what Ammianus was looking for was a strong military emperor,<sup>151</sup> and when this was observed in Julian, he received much praise from the historian. In Julian's obituary

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<sup>147</sup> Cf. 20.8.8.

<sup>148</sup> Ammianus reported that it was pressure from these court intrigues that forced Silvanus to seize power for himself, *CAH*<sup>2</sup> 13, 28.

<sup>149</sup> Cf. Kelly (2004) 220.

<sup>150</sup> Momigliano (1977) 136.

<sup>151</sup> Wilshire (1973) 224.

(25.4.11), Ammianus acknowledged the late emperor's, "skill in military matters" (*scientia rei militaris*). Although, Valentinian was also a very good general, he did not receive the praise he deserved for his exploits.<sup>152</sup> Constantius was said to be successful only in civil wars, but the historian did record victories against foreign enemies during his reign (e.g. 14.10.16, 15.4.13).<sup>153</sup> What Ammianus was critical of was his moderation, and the attitude he held of only fighting when all else failed (14.10.11ff.).<sup>154</sup> When Constantius was successful on the Rhine, Ammianus took a more neutral viewpoint, as the emperor could be perceived, "as in direct competition for glory with Julian."<sup>155</sup> It seemed that what Ammianus desired most of all was a reform of the military.

In the extant books of the *Res Gestae* several imperial figures lost their lives, i.e. Gallus, Julian, Valentinian and Valens.<sup>156</sup> These individuals all found death directly or indirectly through their intemperance, whereas only Constantius died of illness.<sup>157</sup> In the passages of the *Res Gestae*, we can see how emotionally charged were events of this period, and how different individuals responded

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<sup>152</sup> Ammianus at 30.5.3 wrote of Valentinian that, "It was in fact his way to show great severity in punishing the rank and file, but to be more lenient towards persons of high rank, even when they deserved a severe reprimand." Valens was said to have cared for all ranks of the army, see Jones (1964) 148f. For the fortifications and defences of Valentinian and Valens, see Curta (2005) 180.

<sup>153</sup> Cf. Blockley (1989) 465–490. This judgement came primarily from his failings against the Persians.

<sup>154</sup> See also Seager (1999) 586.

<sup>155</sup> Seager (1999) 587. Constantius was chiefly concerned with achieving peace, cf. 21.13.14. According to Thompson's inquiry (1943) 302–315 into Gallus, Ammianus also deliberately suppressed any potential claim to military success that the young Caesar achieved, e.g. against the Isaurians in 14.2 and the uprising of the Jews in Diocaesarea. Nevertheless, although Ammianus downplayed the roles of the other emperors and Caesars in his accounts, that is not to say that Julian's achievements were exaggerated, or not otherwise deserved.

<sup>156</sup> The emperor Jovian also died in the narrative of Ammianus, but it is not possible to say that his death was due to his own emotional state. Rather the suspicion is that he was poisoned deliberately or accidentally on February 17, 364, after a reign of only eight months.

<sup>157</sup> Brandt (1999) 171.

to various real, or supposed, threats, and how certain individuals died subjected to various degrees of emotional involvement.

If the success of an emperor can be measured by the length of his reign, then it was Constantius II who succeeded overall, for his reign lasted from 337 to 361. His time as sovereign helped stabilise the empire against many external threats, but he was so exceedingly concerned about internal ones that he was increasingly hesitant about making his cousins Caesars. Suspicion and doubts dominated Constantius and he was extremely prone to coercion by his flatterers. It was only through sheer fortune that the emperor died before he could destroy Julian and his Gallic armies. Most readers will judge from Ammianus' obituary of Constantius that he was in no way the great tyrant that Ammianus had earlier made him out to be, although clearly he did possess some flaws, as did all the rulers, including Julian.<sup>158</sup>

From the first, Ammianus deliberately engaged his audience, instructing them on how he honestly thought princes should behave. But once we untwist the knots we can see that even his most favoured characters fall to destruction once they succumb to emotions, such as suspicion, fear, and anger. This was apparent in the downfall of his first great hero, the general Ursicinus, who made an angry speech against the rule of Constantius. When the emperor heard of this he became furious and demoted the officer. For Julian, his increasing anger and indignation made him take risks, and when he ran into battle without his breastplate his fate was sealed (although facts other than anger were also at play here). Thus Ammianus' second and final hero met his fate, which can also be seen as the climax of passion.

Valentinian died famously of apoplexy, brought on by a fit of rage against the envoys of the Quadi who sparked his notions of outrage and indignation. His death was a warning to all rulers who came after him that the lack of control of emotions was potentially fatal. The *Res Gestae* ended with the death of Valens at the Battle of

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<sup>158</sup> "Constantius as a ruler had solid virtues as well as obvious faults. And since Ammianus has not seen fit to illustrate the former in the way in which he has dwelt upon the latter, it is hard to resist the conclusion that he has allowed his prejudice against Constantius to affect his objectivity," Blockley (1975) 41.

Adrianople, who, rather than waiting for support from Gratian, sought to achieve glory by engaging the Goths (as well as with the added impetus of anger/jealousy of the achievements of others), but died as a result.<sup>159</sup> Ammianus regarded the Emperor Valens in the same manner as the common soldiery (31.14.5), and described him as having an “uncultivated mind” (*subagrestis ingenii*).<sup>160</sup> Ammianus was as harsh in his criticisms of the emperor as he was with his brother Valentinian. Yet it *was* anger and foolhardiness that killed them both, and about these details, the historian is rarely questioned.

Ammianus spoke to his audience and addressed the current rule with the knowledge that controlling anger was an important factor (other factors include luck and genetics) in securing a long and memorable reign. One emperor came and offered Ammianus hope, but all too soon his life was snuffed out, and no one else could come close to fulfilling Ammianus’ desires for a renewal of the traditional Roman Empire.

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<sup>159</sup> One report was that Valens was burned alive as he hid in a farmhouse. Of this Eusebius (*Hist. Eccl.* 9.10.365) wrote, “By the just judgement of God Himself, Valens was burned alive by the very men who, through his action, will burn hereafter for their heresy.” Cf. Zos. 4.20–24. Most of his baggage train was also captured, Cameron (1993) 116. On Valens’ motives for engaging the Goths, see Burns (1994) 29.

<sup>160</sup> Cf. Matthews (1983) 30. Ammianus also described the praetorian prefect Modestus, whose lack of refinement meant that he did not read the classical authors, *subagreste ingenium, nullis vestustatis lectionibus expositum*, 30.4.2.



## 4. ANGER AND THE URBAN POPULACE IN THE *RES GESTAE*

Again, that is faulty which presents a banal defence, as follows:  
“He was led into crime by anger — or youth — or love.” For  
if excuses of this sort are admitted, the greatest crimes will  
escape unpunished.

(Cicero, *Rhetorica ad Herennium*, 2.25/39, tr. H. Caplan)

### INTRODUCTION

For a man born outside the pomerium of Rome, it is remarkable how much Ammianus applauded the ideals of the Eternal City and how much he desired to be accepted within her walls.<sup>1</sup> It is also notable how often Ammianus returned to *Roma Aeterna*, whereupon he often mentioned the city prefects and the dramas which befell them, in order to keep Rome central to his narrative.<sup>2</sup> Ammianus understood the pressures of the big city, how heated things could become in a crisis and how dangerous it was for those officials who were caught in the middle,<sup>3</sup> especially as Rome in the fourth century was demilitarised and outbreaks of urban violence

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<sup>1</sup> For Ammianus' personal experiences in Rome, see Thompson (1942) 130–134; Cameron (1964) 5–28; Kohns (1975) 485–491. For his experiences in Rome as a rhetorical construction, see Pack (1953b) 181–189; Fontaine (1968) 205, n. 42.

<sup>2</sup> Paschoud (1967) 59–60; Hunt (1985) 189.

<sup>3</sup> See Rowell (1964) 261–313 for Ammianus' conception of the problems facing the Empire in the fourth century and the importance of the officials who administered during this period.



apparently increased.<sup>4</sup> With no police force or military backup,<sup>5</sup> the prefects were forced to deal with the anger of the crowds in a very restricted manner, and often their only option was to flee or die. This led the Bishop Ambrose (*Ep.* 40.13) in 388 to state, “Do you remember, O Emperor, how many homes of prefects at Rome have been burned, and no one exacted punishment?”<sup>6</sup> Ammianus himself appeared concerned with the Stoic principle of respect for the human being<sup>7</sup> and he disapproved of the oppression of the masses by those in positions of power — which is interesting in view of his obvious contempt otherwise.

The historian also recognised problems in cities other than Rome, essentially in places governed by Roman administration. All of these urban centres suffered from the pressures of taxation, food supply and even events surrounding the elections and conduct of bishops and other ecclesiastical figures. In the fourth century the divide between rich and poor was far more significant than that of the first century, as it is estimated that senators were on average five times richer than their predecessors. Taxation had increased three-fold from the first century, and by 350 farmers were taxed more than one third of their produce.<sup>8</sup> This would affect the market gardeners living near or in towns and cities.

When we look at Ammianus’ portrayals of the urban populace, “We must never forget that for Ammianus, however honourable and able he might be, history did not appear as a science

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<sup>4</sup> Africa (1971) 19. The *vigiles* seem to have also been dissolved, Sinnigen (1957) 92–93; MacMullen (1966) 164 and note.

<sup>5</sup> From the reign of Constantine onwards, it was the agents of the offices of the urban prefect who maintained order during the day, Lançon (2000) 46.

<sup>6</sup> As quoted in Africa (1971) 19.

<sup>7</sup> Sabbah (2003) 75.

<sup>8</sup> Brown (1971) 34f. See also Garnsey & Humfress (2001) 108 for the pressures on the rural populations. However, what our sources reveal is that Constantinople had a better system of supply and distribution than Rome did. Therefore fewer shortages were recorded for the former than the latter. The answer to this lies in the fact that in the fourth century Constantinople was regularly an imperial residence, whereas Rome was not, Garnsey & Humfress (2001) 112.

but as an art.”<sup>9</sup> Ammianus admired moderation and detested excess — again another ethical convention.<sup>10</sup> He was bound by these principles to portray those who showed moderation as virtuous, whilst those who displayed excess with disdain. In this way, “Ammianus emerges as a rather skilful writer who was prepared to take liberties with the truth both for artistic and for personal motives.”<sup>11</sup> As such, Ammianus could present characters and events in a matter of fact way that could seem impartial at a glimpse, but when we unfold the layers, we soon reveal the (complexities of) bias that permeated these scenes involving the social orders.

Although Ammianus was generally thought to have had friends amongst the Roman aristocracy,<sup>12</sup> he nevertheless despised the excesses displayed by some of these elites. Ammianus was well read and cultivated,<sup>13</sup> with the mindset of an elitist. His deep conservatism penetrated into his accounts of the upper, learned classes, just as it did the lower levels of society. For he wrote:

Some of them hate learning as they do poison, and read with attentive care only Juvenal and Marius Maximus,<sup>14</sup> in their boundless idleness handling no other books than these, for what reason it is not for my humble mind to judge. Whereas, considering the greatness of their fame and their parentage, they ought to pore over many and varied works...<sup>15</sup>

(28.4.14)

It is a mistake, however, to get caught up in the notion that Ammianus presented the poorer classes favourably in order to make those in power seem less respectable, as the following

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<sup>9</sup> Alföldi (1952) 3.

<sup>10</sup> See Seager (1986) 1.

<sup>11</sup> Blockley (1988) 246.

<sup>12</sup> Wytzes (1936) 34; Thompson (1942) 134; Jonge (1955) 101; Rolfe (1956) xiv; Chastagnol (1960) 12f; Tränkle (1962) 26f.; Momigliano (1963) 97.

<sup>13</sup> Williams (1997) 62.

<sup>14</sup> On Marius Maximus, see Rolfe (1939) xviii; Thompson (1947) 121; Kulikowski (2007) 244–256.

<sup>15</sup> Clearly these ‘many and varied works’ include Ammianus’ own *Res Gestae*, rather than the more popular authors, Juvenal and Marius Maximus, cf. Wilshire (1973) 226.

passage at 17.11.5 revealed for the vice-prefect of Rome, Artemius, “His administration was marked by some violent disturbances, but nothing occurred in it which is worth reporting.” Clearly the population were distressed, and yet it was barely worth mentioning by our historian. Further on (28.1.15) he addressed his readers, informing them why he had left out events that concerned the populace, “To them I can only say that not everything that happened among obscure individuals is worth relating” (*non omnia narratu sunt digna, quae per squalidas transiere personas*).<sup>16</sup>

With deep resignation, Ammianus presented his drama of human existence unfurling like a colourful sail, decorated with all the rhetorical language he dared put forward. This came across strongly in his description of the mass populace, especially those that depended on the state for much of their needs, and who were easily, or at least appeared to be, led by agitators (it was a common fiction of the elite to blame agitators for the anger of the masses, who would understandably become angry even if not led by rabble-rousers). Accounts of the lower classes were necessary in Ammianus’ historical writings, no matter how much the historian despised this order, and thus he sought to dehumanise them with accounts of their mob mentality (a convention of historical writing), and their power that only came through with collective unity.<sup>17</sup> However, it must be pointed out that the ‘mob’ was not composed of the dregs of society — the criminals and general no-goods, — the mob was in fact made up of the tradespeople, shopkeepers and general workers who felt that they were being unjustly treated.<sup>18</sup> This proportion of the urban population was the backbone of society, and they provided the necessary labour, goods and services that ensured the smooth running of the cities. This class then could not be ignored.

However much Ammianus despised the common orders, what he ironically did in his history was to in fact give them a voice, finally. The plebeians had little say, were largely ignored and reviled by anyone who had a little wealth attached to them. This was apparent both inside the cities as well as in the countryside. The rural

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<sup>16</sup> Cf. Grant (1952) 376 ff.

<sup>17</sup> See Harris (2001) 246.

<sup>18</sup> Africa (1971) 4.

workers provided many essentials for the urban populace in the Later Roman Empire. Large landowners ideally looked after their tenants and controlled the extent of taxation, provided entertainments for them and protected them in times of unrest.<sup>19</sup> However, such was the abuse suffered by those outside of the city walls that Bishop Ambrose (*De Nabuthe* 5.21) reported, "I saw a poor man in the course of being forced to pay what he could not pay, and dragged off to jail because some great man's table lacked wine."

In the fourth century, those who gave the plebeians a voice were, in general, the ecclesiastical order, who found a great deal of support in the less privileged classes. Of these, Basil of Caesarea (*Ep.* 18) was a strong advocate. In regards to magnates he said to his congregation, "do not fear the threats of persons in power." The encouragement given by the men of the cloth to those who were poor and disadvantaged helped strengthen their unity and gave the Church a greater, more confident congregation. Holy men had a significant role in the late fourth century, arbitrating between the underprivileged and those that governed them.<sup>20</sup> Brown insisted that a Christian empire was desired by the congregations of the 380s and it was through the fear of pagans, Jews and heretics, as well as the general lawlessness of the times, that the emperors were able to strengthen their Christian dominance.<sup>21</sup> These features certainly led to the introduction, around 368 by the emperor Valentinian — himself a devout Christian — of the *defensores plebis* (the defenders of the plebeians), who were instructed in each city to protect the *populus* from abuse by those in power.<sup>22</sup> However, although the *defensores* may have provided inexpensive justice for the poor, it is unlikely that they actually prevented injustices committed against the plebeians.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> Brown (1971) 37f.

<sup>20</sup> Brown (1971) 96–103.

<sup>21</sup> Brown (1971) 104.

<sup>22</sup> Jones (1964) 144f; Lançon (2000) 83.

<sup>23</sup> Jones (1966) 65. For scholarship on the *defensor civitatis*, see Frakes, (1994) 337, n. 2. Frakes did not agree with the traditional view that Valentinian created the office of *defensor*, but that it probably was introduced around 319 to check corruption and to give justice to the poor.

**Table 4.1 Summary of anger words  
per book of the *Res Gestae* that deal specifically  
with the urban populaces of the Roman Empire**

BOOK	NUMBER OF ANGER WORDS
14	1
15	1
16	0
17	0
18	0
19	1
20	0
21	0
22	4
23	0
24	0
25	0
26	0
27	3
28	0
29	0
30	0
31	0

In light of the instances recorded in table 4.1, it is interesting to consider the context in which the accounts of the populace of the Roman Empire are found. The first specific instances of the anger of the populace begin in books fourteen and fifteen of the *Res Gestae*, then there is one in book nineteen and four in book twenty-two (which all deal with the same instance), and finally three in book twenty-seven. Therefore, for the entire urban populations, Ammianus only recorded specific anger, with causes, consequences and manifestations, only ten times. Nevertheless, when Ammianus did portray the emotions in the poor, it was as a drama on the tragic scale.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> Cf. Blockley (1975) 71 and passages from Ammianus, 18.8.14; 19.6.2; 21.6.7–8.

In spite of Ammianus' misgivings, the common people were sometimes presented with having cause to riot. This occurred, for example, when a prefect or a bishop went bad or when, as in the period of the Emperor Julian's reign, non-Christians were allowed to regain property previously taken by the Church.<sup>25</sup> Although their vengeance was often cruel, other sources suggest it was not unusual, and as with the cruel punishments that the emperors meted out, harsh measures were typical for these times. For example, at Heliopolis, a mob killed the deacon Cyril, as they felt he was accountable for the destruction of many idols there during the reign of Constantine (Thdt. *HE* 3.3). In another instance, which may be atrocity propaganda, but still helps illustrate the point, a mob stripped bare a group of nuns, shamed them and then slit their stomachs and fed them to pigs (Sozom. *Hist. Eccl.* 5.10).<sup>26</sup> These measures were necessarily incorporated into this non-policed, semi-self-help society that found exemplary punishment a must. However, this also reveals the pressures that city officials were being increasingly put under, for when the state sanctioned violence,<sup>27</sup> the prefects were not always on the side being supported in the literature by Ammianus.

This chapter deals with why it was necessary for the historian to discuss, "public disorders and other such vulgarities" (14.6.2). As Ammianus was not writing for the lower orders, but purely for the mostly literate upper orders, he was not bound to flatter the common people who, in all likelihood, would never hear of his *Res Gestae*. Nevertheless, riots added colour and drama to his history, and the populace were either the driving force, or the victims, of these events.

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<sup>25</sup> Cf. Lib. *Ep.* 1364.

<sup>26</sup> See Woods (2000) 702f. for further examples.

<sup>27</sup> Woods (2000) 703.

## THE CAUSES OF ANGER AND THE URBAN POPULACE

### Summary of the Causes of Anger and the Urban Populace

CAUSE OF ANGER	REFERENCE
Outrage	14.7.6, 15.7.3, 19.10.2, 22.11.3, 22.11.5, 22.11.8, 22.11.10, 27.3.10, 27.3.13
<b>TOTAL 9</b>	

In the late fourth century, for many citizens within urban centres, any mismanagement of administration could soon see them lacking in the basic necessities of life. The only voice they had to raise the alarm and demand assistance was a collective one since, as individuals, they lacked the influence and power that a united people obtained. Often when these collective groups emerged, they were united in their anger and belligerence. Ammianus portrayed these mobs as openly aggressive and very dangerous, yet he did not incorporate the wild animal imagery that was so prevalent in his accounts of barbarians. These groups were, after all, mostly Roman, and they were portrayed according to the ideals of Ammianus, encompassing Roman modes of behaviour.

### Unjust Conditions as a Cause of Anger

Angst was felt when the urban populace felt that the officials in charge were not supplying the provisions they required, and as a consequence they vented their rage through violence and threats.<sup>28</sup> For example, in 354 (14.7.6), the citizens of Antioch besought the Caesar Gallus to provide them with the necessities of life, however, he appeared to do nothing to help them, and instead handed them Theophilus, the governor of Syria, telling them that no one would lack provisions unless *he* wanted it so.<sup>29</sup> This infuriated the mob, as their requests were still not being met, but simply delayed and del-

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<sup>28</sup> For a good survey on urban violence in Rome during the Principate, see Africa (1971) 3–21.

<sup>29</sup> Cf. Potter (2004) 475.

egated to someone else.<sup>30</sup> Here the historian brought forth much emotive language to distance himself and his audience from the monstrous actions of the multitude, for, maddened by their hunger (*famis et furoris*) they tore Theophilus to pieces in the hippodrome (Lib. Or. 19.47), and then burnt the house of Eubulus, a wealthy man.<sup>31</sup> It has been suggested that Eubulus was, “doubtless the ringleader in engineering the famine,”<sup>32</sup> so that he could sell his own provisions at inflated prices. According to Julian’s *Misopogon*, when the people of Antioch killed Theophilus, Julian regretted the outrage, but also felt that the anger of the populace against the senate was justified.<sup>33</sup> Corruption amongst officials was one of the leading complaints of the urban poor.

In extreme cases, such as this, the people often had just cause for venting their frustrations.<sup>34</sup> This could reasonably fit in with the factors of anger in the Introduction, “(1) a desire to blame individuals, (2) tendencies to overlook mitigating details before attributing blame, (3) tendencies to perceive ambiguous behaviour as hostile, (4) tendencies to discount the role of uncontrollable factors when attributing causality,” as the mob were determined to attribute blame, and ignored other possible factors. Behaviourists

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<sup>30</sup> However, see the interpretation of this episode by Garnsey & Humfress (2001) 120, who saw that Gallus had in fact put public before private interests. Gallus had charged the senate with profiteering and ordered prices to be lowered. They refused, “replying more vigorously than was fitting.” Later Gallus gave to them Theophilus, whom Garnsey conjectured may have been colluding with the council leaders. Thus Gallus let the mob take their vengeance upon the governor of Syria. This does seem a reasonable interpretation of events. Ammianus of course made Gallus out to be the chief offender in these events, and it is his viewpoint that is the subject of this analysis.

<sup>31</sup> In 375 the Roman mob also burnt the house in Trastevere of the former prefect Symmachus the Elder. He was no longer a prefect, but he was a landowner and as such he was recorded as saying, “he would rather use his wine to quench lime-kilns than sell it at the reduced price that the people hoped for,” 27.3.3–4. For this episode, see Lançon (2000) 118.

<sup>32</sup> Thompson (1943) n. 9. Cf. Julian, *Mis.* 370 C; Lib. Or. 1.103.

<sup>33</sup> Thompson (1947) 62.

<sup>34</sup> For further examples of “mob weapons,” see MacMullen (1966) 344 n. 19.



have studied the effects of anger on people who are subordinate to others, and agree that those lower in the social hierarchy are likely to become angry over unjust treatment by those higher up, and to appraise injustice as highly unfair. The citizens of Antioch certainly felt a high level of hate for those they appraised as the offenders, and took revenge on Theophilus and Eubulus in order to 'get even'.<sup>35</sup>

### Faction Induced Anger

It was not only food and wine shortages that induced the crowds to rage against their leaders, anger was also the direct result of power struggles. This occurred, for example, when 137 corpses were found in the basilica of Sicinius after a mob had rioted. Ammianus reported that it took a long while for the drawn out anger of the people (*efferratamque diu plebem*) to be contained (27.3.13).

Ammianus described the event in Rome with a definite leaning towards the behaviour of the higher officials, rather than in supporting the rioting of the mob, most of whom were Christians. Appointed *praefectus urbi* in 365 was Viventius, whom Ammianus (27.3.11) described as, "an upright and wise Pannonian," something that he certainly did not do for Viventius' countrymen, the emperors Valentinian and Valens — although he was perhaps consciously making a contrasting point. Viventius' rule as prefect was relatively peaceful until he had to deal with bloody conflicts within the ranks of Christians, as Damasus<sup>36</sup> and Ursinus both tried to claim the bishopric left vacant by the popular Leontius.<sup>37</sup> As the two men competed for the see, violence broke out between the supporters of each party. The causes of anger here fit in with anger determinants, "(1) a response to an accumulation of stress" and "(6) a learnt response to certain situations." Damasus and his followers stormed the basilica in Trastevere after Ursinus was consecrated bishop. After three days of violence and much

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<sup>35</sup> Fitness (2000) 159.

<sup>36</sup> The final victory of Damasus to the papal throne can be attributed to the rich noble clans, not necessarily Christians, who possibly saw him as easily manipulated and thus advantageous to political scheming, see Ruggini (2003) 373. Cf. Lippold (1965) 105–128; Curran (2000) 137–142.

<sup>37</sup> Cf. Matthews (1989) 421.

bloodshed, he took the building.<sup>38</sup> In October 366, the disturbance became so vicious that in one day one hundred and thirty seven Christians were found dead in the basilica of Sicininus. It is an example of how strong the will of the mob could be, for Ammianus revealed to his audience that the prefect Viventius could not check this escalation of violence and was forced instead to retire to the safety of the suburbs. In fact, “The dispute between Damasus and Ursinus had led to the most serious outbreak of Christian violence at Rome since the persecutions.”<sup>39</sup>

To further attest to the understanding that Ammianus did not support the anger of the mob, or the behaviour of their ringleaders, the historian compared the ostentation of bishops of the city to those who live frugally in the countryside. This was certainly a moral comment on the behaviour of those who lived within the city and was directed not only at Christians, but at pagans as well (27.3.14–15).<sup>40</sup> This helped to illustrate the importance of retaining the favour of the Roman mob for political manoeuvrings, for the Christian clergy had a good deal of political sway in this period (at least amongst the Christian population).

### Insult as a Cause of Anger

One episode that invoked the rage of the population of Alexandria occurred on 24 December 361 (22.11.3f.), which led to the death of bishop Georgius along with two imperial officials.<sup>41</sup> This incident was a direct result of the anti-pagan sentiments of these three men, for Georgius refused to hand over a *mithraeum* on which a church was being built (Socrates, *Hist. Eccl.* 3.2.1–10). He had also allegedly turned informer against members of the populace for a variety of reasons, mainly pertaining to treason against the emperor

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<sup>38</sup> Curran (2000) 139.

<sup>39</sup> Curran (2000) 142. These riots were only quelled when the *praefectus urbi* Vettius Agorius Praetextatus exiled Ursinus, producing profound peace. See Barnes (1998) 115. As Jones (1964) 151 stated, Praetextatus, in criticising the institution of bishops, used to say to Damasus in jest, “Make me bishop of Rome and I’ll be a Christian tomorrow.”

<sup>40</sup> Cf. Hunt (1985) 191.

<sup>41</sup> According to Jones (1964) 121–122, the lynching of Georgius was a reaction to Julian’s change of policy that enforced religious toleration.

Constantius.<sup>42</sup> Moreover, the bishop had infuriated members of the population through his decision to have pagan temples removed from the city.<sup>43</sup> Of the officials, Dracontius, the superintendent of the mint, overthrew a pagan altar and Diodorus, an honorary count, cut the curls of some boys, believing it a fashion of pagan worship. The response of the Alexandrians was to kill the three men, mutilate and burn the bodies, then to throw the remains into the sea to prevent relic hunting. This episode is not strictly confined to placing blame on pagans who reacted against the increasing influence of Christianity within Alexandria, for Ammianus wrote (22.11.10), “the whole population (had) been inflamed by universal hatred of Georgius” (*Georgi odio omnes indiscrete flagrabant*). This then implied that Christians also participated in the murders, for one supposes that Georgius had also implicated Christians when he made these accusations to Constantius.<sup>44</sup> Whatever the case, the “mob mentality” brought the population, both Christian and pagan, together in their fury against injustice in their uprising against the oppressive minority in power. This relates to factors of anger, “(1) a desire to blame individuals” and “(3) tendencies to perceive ambiguous behaviour as hostile.” Also determinants of anger, “(2) a sense of betrayal, when there is an acute awareness of disappointment” and “(3) a response to righteous indignation” (see Introduction).

**PRIMARY RESPONSES TO ANGER  
IN THE ROMAN POPULACE**

**Summary of Primary Responses**

MANIFESTATION OF ANGER	REFERENCE
Gnashing and grinding of the teeth	22.11.8

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<sup>42</sup> For further episodes of Constantius listening to informers, see 14.1.10; 14.7.9; 15.3.5; 18.3.6; 18.4.4, etc. See also Zos. 2.55; Philost 3.28, 4.1, Joh Monachus, 15.

<sup>43</sup> Curran (2000) 195, suggested that the anger of the Alexandrians reflected the freer religious policies of Julian.

<sup>44</sup> Hunt (1985) 192.

Verbal threats	15.7.3
TOTAL 2	

As one would expect, there are only a limited number of primary responses to anger given by Ammianus in regards to the populations of the Roman Empire, and as with other groups previously discussed (Roman military, Persians, barbarians), these are said to be exhibited collectively. This is essential, for the historian would have little cause to describe separate details. On top of this, these primary responses gave the audience the sense that as a united group the *populus* were able to show their anger as a viable force, as opposed to only a few standing out — see the Peter Valvomeres episode below.

**Verbal Threats as a Primary Response**

In Ammianus’ time, as in the time of Tacitus, the large majority of the urban population were poor. The wealthiest were the patrons with their dependents, then beneath them were the shop owners, tradesmen, many labourers, and at the bottom of the scale were the urban poor, and of course the beggars and homeless. For many labourers their work was seasonal, such as those working in shipyards, therefore, in the off-season, these men and women needed some type of support. In the fourth century, the poor were supported by public grants and religious charity. Large handouts on behalf of the church to the poor were occurring on a grand scale already in Antioch in this century.<sup>45</sup> These handouts may have encouraged poor from the countryside to move into the large urban centres.<sup>46</sup> This influx led the rhetorician Libanius (*Or.* 41.11) to complain of the arrival of people with no homes, no employment, no family ties and nothing to do but make trouble.

The poor had no real means of supporting themselves when provisions were lacking. For example, Ammianus wrote that the Roman mob rioted again with its habitual violence (*cum itidem plebs excita calore*) when there was a shortage of wine. The

<sup>45</sup> Cameron (1993) 106, 177. For an overview of the needs of the poor in urban centres, see Garnsey & Humfress (2001) 126f.

<sup>46</sup> As well as the natural flow towards cities, for cities have always been magnets. There was nothing new about immigration. A higher death toll in the cities meant that numbers needed to be kept up.

prefect Leontius<sup>47</sup> was said to have bravely faced the insolent and threatening (*inmitteret et minacem*) crowd, even though his life was in peril (15.7.3). Clearly “habitual” here referred to the previous incident (15.7.2), in which Leontius quelled a riot in the city and ordered the leaders to be seized, then tortured and condemned them to exile then and there. This reveals the pressures that both parties had to endure, and Ammianus did not make unfounded criticisms of either side, which he did on other occasions, even though “habitual violence” does suggest a negative implication here.

The urban prefects were vital in the fourth century, for they represented the emperors who no longer lived in Rome.<sup>48</sup> This however put prefects such as Leontius in an often-precarious position. Though Ammianus admired his bravery, it was sometimes beyond the prefect’s control when things went amiss and the population suffered from shortages. The prefects had to face the wrath of the people, which the emperors were, for the most part, separated from. Leontius’ life was in the hands of the mob.

The poor must necessarily play their part, and throughout Roman historical portrayals were inevitably presented as a group rather than individuals. As stated above, it was not until the advent of Christian sources that the poor began to come to the fore. For a long time the lower classes provided the bulwark of the congregations, and through appealing to the masses the bishops enhanced their own positions.<sup>49</sup> As ever, the poor were presented as using violence in order to gain a voice for themselves. The rioting of crowds within Rome when complaining of shortages and other matters had a long and turbulent history.<sup>50</sup>

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<sup>47</sup> See *PLRE* Leontius 22, 1.503. Flavius Leontius may have been *comes Orientis* in 349. He was *quaestor sacri palatii* for Gallus in 354 and prefect of the city of Rome in 355–356, Edbrooke (1976) 43.

<sup>48</sup> Cf. Edbrooke (1976) 54. For the *praefectus urbi*, see Jones (1964) 689ff.

<sup>49</sup> Cf. Cameron (1993) 130.

<sup>50</sup> See MacMullen (1966) Appendix A, for a collection of recorded instances of famines in the Roman Empire (not all urban).

### Gnashing and Grinding of the Teeth as a Response to Anger

Another episode of mob violence occurred at 22.11.8, when Georgius was murdered on 24 December 361 by a rioting mob in Alexandria. In this episode Ammianus did not hold back on his description of the delight the entire population felt at the destruction of the outspoken and hated bishop, where their anger was said to be manifested through the grinding of their teeth (*infrendens*). Ammianus despised Georgius not only for his anti-paganism, but also for being an unscrupulous informer.<sup>51</sup> This outbreak of violence was not purely religiously motivated,<sup>52</sup> for in the *Historia Acephala* we discover that the attack on Georgius was caused by the news of the death of Constantius, who had given Georgius the see of Alexandria. Ammianus misplaced this episode to a year later, and reported that it was Constantius, not Julian, who had to be talked out of reprisals against the citizens of Antioch.<sup>53</sup> Obviously, the bishop had aroused the rage of the Alexandrians due to his harsh measures against pagans within the city. However, it was further deeds committed by the bishop that prompted the population into exacting their revenge. Georgius was corrupt and immoral, and was self-serving at the expense of the populace. As Ammianus revealed, he supposedly conspired with Constantius against the people. Both Christians and pagans turned against him, for he targeted both groups in his conspiracies. The bishop also enhanced the corrosion of the relationship between Christians and pagans in Alexandria. He did this by putting into practice

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<sup>51</sup> Cf. Boeft & Bremmer (1995) 157.

<sup>52</sup> Hahn (2004) 66–77.

<sup>53</sup> Hunt (1985) 192. Confusion arises out of the dating of this episode, for Hunt asserted that the date of this episode was established from the *Historia Acephala*, 2.10, a chronicle of the life of Athanasius, which made it occur in 361, and this was supported by Barnes (1998) 38 n.13. However, as it was in the narrative of 363 in the *Res Gestae*, a year earlier makes it 362. Indeed, more confusion arises when we realise that Ammianus placed the death of Georgius as resulting from the execution of Artemius. However, as Barlow and Brennan (2001) 243f. pointed out, Artemius was not killed until the winter of 362/363. Therefore it is likely that Georgius was not killed until a later date and that Ammianus was incorrect in his chronology.

Constantius’ enforcements against paganism.<sup>54</sup> This adds to Ammianus’ previously discussed condemnation of the emperor Constantius, who was only too willing to listen to the rumours spread by men like Georgius, individuals who purportedly were only out to further their own cause.

To bring out these manifestations in each anger episode would be to dwell too much on the obvious, and we are only given a select few by Ammianus that are necessary to frame anger and show it in its most banal form. By using terms such as *horrendis* at 22.11.8, we are presented with emotion in its most primitive form, stripping it raw and leaving nothing to protect the audience from the horrors of what had occurred. The events at Alexandria were not unique, Christian leaders were not immune to violence against their person, no matter their situation. What Ammianus was trying to communicate to his audience was that those who were in such positions must behave according to their stations and not abuse their power. For ultimately this led to the final judgement — this time from the combined populace of Alexandria, both Christian and pagan.

**SECONDARY RESPONSES TO ANGER  
IN THE ROMAN POPULACE**

**Summary of Secondary Responses**

SECONDARY RESPONSE	REFERENCE
Attacks on property	27.3.10
General violence <sup>55</sup>	14.7.6, 27.3.13
Insolence and blame directed towards an official	15.7.3
The killing of high-ranking individuals	22.11.3–10
TOTAL 5	

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<sup>54</sup> Hahn (2004) 66–77.

<sup>55</sup> With the plebeians, general violence is perhaps primary, but can also fit into the secondary response category.

Ammianus wrote at length of the undercurrents of tension that permeated the empire during this period of the fourth century, much of which he had personal experience of. What he presented his audience with was an essentially negative picture — although the responses were almost identical to the groups we have already looked at. The first response to anger within the safety of a collective is frequently one that involves violence, usually directed towards the cause of that anger or, if not available, their property and possessions. The anger of the mob was often short-lived, blazing ferociously until the fuel was consumed, and then dying out until the next incident occurred to set in motion the whole process again — though not necessarily with the same mob. There are no responses that are unique to the above summary but, as with mutinies in the army, rioting was the most effective way for the lower classes to get their message across.

### **Riots in Rome**

Ammianus described the rioting of the mob in Rome when Christians were found murdered (27.3.13). This incident was significant enough for the historian to record, as he could moralise on the behaviour of bishops. However, it also served to show that the mob could have some influence over the behaviour of officials. As we discussed earlier, Ammianus incorporated a direct moralising tone in regards to the bishops of Rome.<sup>56</sup> As previously seen, Ammianus used carefully concealed language to deliver his personal viewpoint regarding specific situations and behaviours. There is no doubt that Ammianus wrote from a non-Christian perspective, and his style of writing was close to the secularism of his forebears. In such cases as that of Georgius, factionism amongst Christians within urban centres occasionally led to acts of violence. But apart from the Damasus and Ursinus incident, Christianisation was not necessarily a factor in mob behaviour. In this case, the anger that led to rioting was noticeable because of its rarity.

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<sup>56</sup> Cf. Hunt (1985) 191.



### Response to Corrupt Officials

This study on the anger of the urban populace has revealed that it was the governors and prefects who came under fire most often in Ammianus' material. Sometimes the hatred directed towards them was justified and sometimes it was not. Yet there were certain individuals who deserved their infamous reputation. The urban prefect Lampadius was one of these, for it was reported that he would send out minor officials to acquire building materials from the citizens of Rome without compensation. Ammianus consequently described the resultant fury of the impoverished people (*iracundiam pauperum*) (27.3.10).

This episode was of an official seizing private property without any type of payment, and it may even resemble nothing more than common larceny. First of all, the city prefect of Rome (Lampadius) was concerned with building works, which was one of his official duties. Secondly, this passage speaks of not providing for the expense from the 'usual public funds'. This may indicate that it was not the corruption of the aristocratic pagan Volusianus Lampadius<sup>57</sup> that led to these misfortunes for the poor, but rather it might have occurred at a lower level, by those who may have been pocketing the funds and taking the goods without payment. These are only suppositions, and neither the mob nor Ammianus were concerned with the root of the problem. Their only concern was to point the finger at the city prefect, the man who was ultimately in charge of this affair. As we have discussed, Ammianus was at pains to show the moral decline within the Eternal City, and a prefect who robbed the poor fitted into this framework nicely.

Of Lampadius, it is said that, "Ammianus describes Volusianus when he was urban prefect of Rome in 365 as being vain, arrogant, and the victim of riots similar to those Orfitus had been unable to control."<sup>58</sup> In this year, the poor allegedly had enough of their prefect taking advantage of them, and their response was to lynch Lampadius — who only just escaped in the

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<sup>57</sup> *PLRE*, vol. 1, s.v. "C. Ceionius Rufius Volusianus *signo* Lampadius," 978–80. See also Edbrooke (1976) 48f. Lançon (2000) 48.

<sup>58</sup> Lampadius was also one of the conspirators against the usurper Silvanus, 15.5.4–5; Edbrooke (1974) 48.

nick of time, being forced to withdraw to the Milvian Bridge.<sup>59</sup> Violence at times ensured changes in governance, and this time the population was able to institute its authority over a (possibly) corrupt official. When we look at this from a modern psychological perspective we can relate the *populus*' reaction to their feelings of hatred, hostility and loathing, which are powerful steps "in the creation of outrage and the fixing of blame." These emotions have the power to, "alter goals from practical results to punishment of opponents."<sup>60</sup> Certainly this supports Ammianus' description of the reaction of the Roman poor.

## CONSEQUENCES OF ANGER AND THE ROMAN POPULACE

### Summary of the Consequences for Selves and Others

CONSEQUENCES FOR SELVES	REFERENCE
Proclamations issued against violence in the <i>populus</i>	22.11.3ff.
Rioting was quelled	27.3.13
The punishment of ringleaders	15.7.3
Consequence for Others	Reference
Destruction of property	14.7.6
Officials forced to flee for their lives/or forced to hide	27.3.10, 27.3.13
Officials left unguarded	15.7.3
Officials/other high-ranking individuals killed	14.7.6, 22.11.3ff.
TOTAL 9	

Ammianus recorded only a select few consequences of anger for the mob itself, and this perhaps reflected the importance he believed was attached to those particular episodes. The types of responses to anger for a mob were quite limited, for what the mob

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<sup>59</sup> Barnes (1998) 116. Ammianus held no sympathy for Lampadius — as we shall discuss in the following chapter on magnates — as he saw him as conceited, for when he restored buildings in Rome, he then had his name inscribed onto them as if he were the original builder, 27.3.7. Cf. Edbrooke (1976) 49.

<sup>60</sup> Jasper (1998) 406.

desired was immediate results and to gain this violence was often involved. Once their demands were met, their anger soon dissipated; however, these were usually short-term gains and did not solve the long-term problems. Or, if the rioters were resisted strongly enough, their anger often turned to fear, and they were forced to break up without achieving their aims. What we have here is anger used to cover up fear, for what the populace most feared was ill treatment from their superiors when they were already struggling hard to get through each day.

### **The Mob Takes the Upper Hand**

When it seemed that high-ranking officials were taking advantage of them, the urban populace could collectively channel their fear into anger, a powerful force that could be used very effectively in inspiring fear in others. Ammianus showed how effective the arousing of fear could be, for twice (27.3.10, 27.3.13) he wrote of officials being forced to flee or hide as a direct result of the anger of the mob, which was inevitable in a city without a police force. Fear could even affect those who were meant to be unmoved by emotion, such as at 15.7.3, “(Leontius) was a hard man to frighten and kept straight on, with the result that part of his escort abandoned him, although he was running into manifest danger” (*difficilis ad pavorem recte tetendit adeo, ut eum obsequen ... desereret licet in periculum festinantem abruptum*).

Here the contrast between Leontius’ bravery and the apparent fear of his men, which led them to flee, was displayed. The bravery of Leontius can be contrasted with the seeming cowardice of the later prefects that Ammianus discussed. These were men such as Tertullus who, in 359, offered his own son to the angry mob; Lampadius in 365–367 who fled the crowds and Viventius in 366–367, who was forced to take refuge in his villa in the suburbs. It was only Leontius who, with his courage, was able to respond to the anger of the mob and consequently subdue it. It was not a rare occurrence for these riots to transpire, and try as they might, the city prefects could not always prevent misfortunes from happening. Also, there were not always heavy consequences for the populace,

for this could easily entail a new eruption of angry resentment.<sup>61</sup> The account of Leontius serves to highlight the correct course of action that a prefect of the city should take, and it also helps to demonstrate the true nature of the crisis points they were faced with during their terms, as well as implying the level of fear and anger amongst the populace.

Ammianus recorded the punishment of one named individual, the ringleader Peter Valvomeres, whom we shall discuss further below (15.7.3). The dissolution of the riot led by Peter was achieved through the quick thinking and bravery of Leontius, who made an example of Peter.

A possible backlash against a mob could be an effective precaution through the issuing of a simple threat of violence if further action occurred. This was apparent at 22.11.11, when Julian issued an edict against the Alexandrians for the killing of Georgius. The emperor had to be talked out of taking retribution on the guilty parties when he heard of this *facinus nefandum*, and was counselled by his close confidants.<sup>62</sup> Whatever the religious implications, it was clear that the emperor was angry with the Alexandrians, and was forced to threaten them with punishment to prevent further uprisings. Ammianus revealed that it was not only groups who reacted to anger violently, but emperors could also react aggressively to anger. When it came to the resentment of the public there was a general consensus that it had to be calmed as quickly as possible. However, as these incidents involved Roman citizens, matters were (mostly) resolved less belligerently.

### The Destruction of Property

This leads us back to the incident at 14.7.6 that we discussed above, when the citizens of Antioch implored Gallus to provide them with the necessities of life, he however handed them Theophilus, the governor of Syria. The consequence of the mob's mood was to focus their anger into violence. As Juneau pointed out, "The text uses the singular third person form *inflamavit*. The mob is a single entity, or at least is acting as such." Here, Ammianus contrasted the full impact of the united mob as one

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<sup>61</sup> No one effectively challenged the people's "right" to protest, Garnsey & Humfress (2001) 114.

<sup>62</sup> However, this point of view is challenged, Hunt (1985) 192.

being, strong and remorseless, against one man, “who enjoyed a great reputation among his fellows.” Eubulus was not faceless and without soul, whereas the mob was. Ammianus took the emotions of the audience and put them through the wringer as he described the terrible consequences for Eubulus and his home. This was a conflict of classes, with the wealthy and well fed in opposition against the hungry poor. It is likely that Ammianus felt the unfairness of these actions against a man who deserved some respect. The implication here is that Gallus was thoroughly to blame for, “It is Gallus, or more specifically his words, which aided the mob and set it in motion.” Whether we can see the mob acting as an extension of Gallus seems out of the bounds of probability,<sup>63</sup> for the mob acted without a head and Gallus had by this stage given up on his people and let others take over this situation. The consequences of the mob’s rage were as clear here as anywhere else and it was through such depictions that Ammianus made his strongest moral comments on the danger of collective anger. This is still to some extent an attack on Gallus, as it showed how his failures as a leader negatively impacted those who (probably) deserved better. In Ammianus’ condemnation of the mob, the Caesar was, in effect, the one to blame.

**COMMENTS BY AMMIANUS**

**Summary of Comments by Ammianus**

COMMENT	REFERENCE
Continual losses of the poor	27.3.10
Fearful outrages	14.7.6ff.
Wretched victims	22.11.3ff.
TOTAL 3	

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<sup>63</sup> Juneau (2006) 104–105 claimed that the Antiochenes were, “an extension of the Caesar, motivated by rage along with hunger. The descriptions of Gallus’ passion for the games and his reaction resemble his description of the mob’s mood. It also does not think, but is guided by emotion and bodily needs.” The mob certainly was, but not in accordance with the Caesar, who no longer showed concern for these matters.

### Continual Losses

Most of the urban poor in Rome and Constantinople depended on the food dole, or subsidised grain, and viewed it as their right.<sup>64</sup> When these benefits were not provided the citizens immediately took this personally, often using violence to convey their outrage. Violence was often their only means for voicing their displeasure, as in reality they had no alternative way for communicating their desperation. Ammianus was aware of the pressures on the poor as his comment at 27.3.10 revealed, “His (Lampadius’) rapid flight barely saved him from the fury of enraged and impoverished people who had continual losses to deplore.” This related to the continuing misfortunes of the poor which were exacerbated by Lampadius’ requisition of their materials. Here it was not merely over-confidence or impudence that led the commons to riot.

### Fearful Outrages

At 14.7.8 Ammianus wrote, “Theophilus, who was innocent, was the victim of a fearful outrage.” Although this was not an isolated incident, Ammianus believed that this episode was worthy of note. Firstly because it reflected badly on Gallus, who had presented the angry mob with Theophilus, for the Caesar was not interested in listening to their cries of indignation or securing supplies from the provinces. And although he was not directly blamed for the death of Theophilus, it did appear seem the lynching was to an extent provoked by him.<sup>65</sup> Secondly, Ammianus was able to contrast the fate of Theophilus with that of a man named Serenian, a former military commander whom Ammianus accused of practising the dark arts, and also held him responsible for the sack of Celseis in Phoenicia. This man, “who deserved universal execration, got off scot-free...” Although the mob behaved most viciously, Ammianus not so much blamed them for their actions, but the actions of the highest-ranking individuals, who had the power to stop such violence from occurring in the first place.<sup>66</sup> This attitude was corroborated at 15.13.2, when Constantius sent a commission-

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<sup>64</sup> In 369 Valentinian substituted six loaves of high quality bread for twenty coarse loaves, *Cod. Theod.* 14.17.5. Cf. Africa (1971) 6 n. 15.

<sup>65</sup> Thompson (1943) 306.

<sup>66</sup> Julian, *Mis.* 370c also saw that the mob’s anger towards the senate was justified.

er, Musonianus, to investigate the death of Theophilus, but was instructed to treat the situation mildly, “proof that even the central government took a lenient view of the affair.” The notion that Theophilus was innocent seems dubious, due the mob’s angry reaction and the leniency of Constantius.<sup>67</sup>

## CONCLUSION

With the urban populace, anger was felt on a level similar to that of the Roman military, where each individual was supported and strengthened in his actions by that of the group surrounding him. Although Ammianus revealed far more support for the soldiers, he did show some understanding of the anger of the mob within the city of Rome, as well as other urban centres where popular disaffection influenced the conduct of politics in this period.

Within urban centres, small-scale violence was a natural part of events, and this aggression was reflected throughout most of the larger provincial cities when demands were not being met. Sometimes these demands were seen as being nothing more than satisfying the fickle needs of the populace. Nevertheless, there was an element of understanding in Ammianus’ accounts which suggested that he did have a sense of the populations’ hardships — although, snobbishly, he was still very much contemptuous of the poor as a whole. When Lampadius was commandeering iron, lead and bronze from the poor without paying for them, Ammianus made the statement that these people had, “continual losses to deplore” (27.3.10). Even if he does not commiserate with them, he at least appreciated their situation. Nevertheless, this episode seems to strike more of a blow at Lampadius than giving support to the Roman commons, for the historian felt no fondness for this particular prefect.

Another incident also reminded the readers of how turbulent situations could become when crowds became incensed due to their needs not being met. At 15.7.3, Ammianus wrote that during the prefecture of Leontius (355–356), an angry mob confronted the prefect when they suffered from a wine shortage, and as a result the populace became, “an insolent and threatening crowd” (*minacem*

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<sup>67</sup> Thompson (1943) 308. Cf. Lib. Or. 19.47.

... *saevientem*).<sup>68</sup> In this chapter we also get mention of Peter Valvomeres (15.7.4),<sup>69</sup> the ringleader of this particular mob, who was made famous in the essay by Erich Auerbach.<sup>70</sup> Peter was a tall and imposing figure who was quickly targeted by Leontius, and he was flogged and exiled from Rome for inciting the people to riot. This incident revealed how fickle and easily quelled the rioters were when a figure of authority took actions against them. For when the prefect had Peter strung up, the crowd, appearing hundreds strong from Ammianus' description, quickly dispersed, evidently fearful that they would suffer a similar punishment, even though they greatly outnumbered those in authority, as well as the guards who supported them. In this incident and others, Ammianus demonstrated the not unlikely conclusion that the homogeneity of the mob was quickly ended, often through the efforts of a single person in power.<sup>71</sup>

In our examination of the episode concerning Bishop Georgius in Alexandria, it revealed more about the corruption of bishops and officials, than it did the capriciousness of the Alexandrians. The mob that killed the governor of Syria in Antioch was responsible for much destruction, yet what Ammianus brought out, rather than accusations against the Antiochenes, was the poor administration of Gallus and the irresponsibility of those who were meant to manage provisions. As we showed, this was not an attack on Christians, but rather a discourse on the tribulations of provincial officers.

Throughout the descriptions of mob activity, what we do get, in spite of the recurrence of rage, was that there was an undercurrent of fear, masked by anger and acts of violence. The general populations of the large cities were at the mercy of the whims of the elite, who were assigned to officiate over the needs of the poor. At times we do get some sympathy for these aristocrats from Ammianus, but generally there was the notion that power

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<sup>68</sup> Cf. Africa (1971) 19. See also the incident in 364, when a mob burned the house of the prefect Symmachus who had threatened to destroy his stock of wine rather than sell it at reduced prices, 27.3.4.

<sup>69</sup> Cf. Africa (1971) 19.

<sup>70</sup> Auerbach (1953). See also Matthews (1987) 277–284, 417.

<sup>71</sup> Cf. Hunt (1985) 189 n. 22.



breeds corruption, and the historian employed his skills in rhetoric to moralise on these issues.

The focus of this chapter was on the populations of large cities, which when united in their anger become what is collectively known as a mob. This centrality of a group mindset diminished their humanity.<sup>72</sup> It created a fearful picture of mass unity and force. Ammianus was by no means a supporter of the poor, for in many ways he agreed with Cicero's (*Off.* 2.61–63) assessment that some of the poor, at least, deserved their misfortune. When we put this into a philosophical light, Aristotle would have condoned some of these riots, whereas Seneca really did not think about the starving wretches at all. What the historian would like to have seen was an avoidance of the issues that created mobs, by removing corruption.<sup>73</sup> This is essentially what much of his *Res Gestae* was trying to teach.

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<sup>72</sup> Although they did not accept Tertullus' offer, 19.10.

<sup>73</sup> This assessment is supported by Salvian, *De gubernatione Dei*, 4.4.21, writing about 440, who outlined the poverty, rebellion and brigands and traced it to the corruption of the ruling classes. In his opinion this was why the barbarians were victorious, "We have been preparing the way for this for a long time by oppression of the masses, and now we who subjected others are ourselves being subjected."

## 5. MAGNATES AND ANGER IN THE *RES GESTAE*

For it is perhaps a mistake to say that acts committed through anger or desire, are involuntary.

(Aristotle, *Eth. Nic.* 3.3, 1111A 24)

### INTRODUCTION

Although expressions of anger within official circles were not the most widely recorded by Ammianus, their impact could be wide ranging, even more so than the anger of the *populus* whom they helped govern. The *populus* only had an advantage in numbers when it was united through a common cause, whereas the officials could enforce emotion-driven directives that were seriously damaging to individuals and their families, as well as to larger social groups. Strongly defined expressions of anger for military and civilian officials, as well as for other magnates, are found ten times in the *Res Gestae*. These are of especial importance for Ammianus, as they stemmed from individuals who were in significant and public positions, and their behaviour was a reflection upon the elite sectors of society. Furthermore, Ammianus was far more concerned with the effects that events and circumstances had on the elite than on the poorer classes. Therefore, these expressions were far more significant from the historian's point of view than were the emotional lives of the general *populus*. Ammianus could identify with these magnates far more than with the common people. He therefore had more scope, or incentive, to judge them. In this chapter, as in others, we could easily apply the following consideration by Aristotle (*Rh.* 2.1):

The Emotions are all those feelings that so change men as to affect their judgements, and that are also attended by pain or pleasure. Such are anger, pity, fear and the like, with their opposites. We must arrange what we have to say about each of them under three heads. Take, for instance, the emotion of anger: here we must discover (1) what the state of mind of angry people is, (2) who the people are with whom they usually get angry, and (3) on what grounds they get angry with them. It is not enough to know one or even two of these points; unless we know all three, we shall be unable to arouse anger in any one. The same is true of the other emotions.

However, the argument is that in their displays of anger, magnates and other officials were in fact more restricted in how openly they could express this emotion, for theirs was a public profile, open to attack by those above and beneath them, as well as their own social peers. Like other groups, anger in magnates had two outcomes, violence directed towards others, or violence brought down upon them. Also, during and after their term of office, these officials would usually have to answer for their actions to the emperor, and in that respect, restraint was worth considering (although some seem to have avoided this). As Juvenal once wrote (8.88.135–139), a governor must control two vices, anger and greed, for if he implemented a great deal of angry punishments in the provinces, when he returned to Rome this would certainly cause the individual difficulties. The advice to rule without rage was well founded, as there was constant rivalry between the governor and the local authorities.<sup>1</sup>

In the fourth century, Libanius also warned that a governor's reputation could be affected by his irascible nature (*Or.* 20.28). These instances can, therefore, be used rhetorically as a way of describing certain methods of behaviour. For instance, by relating the cruel actions of Paulus who took on board the anger of Constantius and wreaked death upon those suspected of treason

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<sup>1</sup> Harris (2001) 242.

(19.12.7),<sup>2</sup> or in the case of Procopius, who, in believing that Arbitio had rebuffed him, ordered his priceless furniture to be seized (28.6.13), Ammianus was making a moral judgement on the conduct of individuals, even when he did not make an explicit remark.

An analysis of Ammianus' portrayal of anger and magnates illuminates not only the complexities and subtleties of the expressions of anger, but also Ammianus' own stereotypical perception of these events, along with his own judgement of the cruel natures inherent in certain individuals. *Crudelitas* was represented as a *vitium*, one of the worst faults in many of his figures.<sup>3</sup> As Brandt pointed out, this aspect was almost exclusively attributed to Romans who were deeply concerned with the prosecution of — actual or alleged — legal violations.<sup>4</sup> Cruelty and anger often worked hand in hand, with one enhancing and exacerbating the other. The psychological causes of this often stemmed from fear on behalf of the self and were projected on others in a sinister form of paranoia.

Very rarely did Ammianus accord any praise to individual members of the senatorial elite. L. Aurelius Avianus Symmachus, urban prefect in 364–365, was a rare exception (27.3.3–4).<sup>5</sup> The majority of the senators were, “denounced as dissipated

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<sup>2</sup> Cf. Cic. *Mur* 49, for anger against those who threatened Catiline, *vultus erat ipsius plenus furoris, oculi sceleris, sermo adrogantiae, sic ut ei iam exploratus et domi conditus consulatus videretur*.

<sup>3</sup> On the topic of cruelty from Hellenistic to Roman times, see Dowling (2006).

<sup>4</sup> While the noun is used without exception for the characterisation of personal characteristics or behaviours, Ammianus referred the adjective (*crudelis*) more rarely to persons than to ways of acting, Brandt (1999) 155. As Seager (1986) 21 and n. 20 stated, “Emperors are by no means the only ones who offend. Condemnation of Romans, officials and others, is almost always unequivocal.”

<sup>5</sup> “Long before this, however, Apronianus was succeeded by Symmachus, a man of the most exemplary learning and discretion. Through his efforts the Holy City enjoyed peace and plenty to an unusual degree.” Leontius, urban prefect, 35–356 and Anatolius, praetorian prefect in Illyricum, both received praise from Ammianus for their good administration, 15.7 & 19.11.

layabouts.”<sup>6</sup> In his Roman digressions we are overwhelmed by the historian’s own distortions and interpretations of the city dwellers, for the historian frowned upon the behaviour of wealthy senators who spent their money on teams of servants, carriages, riders and uniforms, as well as on the reception they gave to foreigners and, most irking of all, their subsequent indifference (14.6.9–17; 28.4.8–19).<sup>7</sup> Ammianus was not alone in this attitude, for he wrote of the emperor Valentinian (30.8.10) that he, “hated the well-dressed, the educated, the rich, and the highly born” (*bene vestitos oderat et eruditos et opulentos et nobiles*). Ammianus’ opinion of the Roman aristocracy fits into the first, third and fourth of these categories, for he, likewise, despised the, “ostentation, idleness and fraudulent pretensions of its members.”<sup>8</sup> Being so morally corrupt meant that unjustified displays of anger and related emotions were expected from the aristocracy.

Ammianus described the urban prefectures and the pressures that the cities of Rome and Constantinople placed upon them. The city of Rome had been given an urban prefect in 16 BC by the emperor Augustus, whose duty was to represent the *princeps*, and this institution lasted into late antiquity.<sup>9</sup> In the fourth century the emperors no longer resided in Rome, and these urban prefects came under the greatest pressure from the *populus* who could no longer express their concerns directly to the emperor and whose demands constantly needed to be met. The duties of the urban prefect included: public order, provisioning the city and public works,<sup>10</sup> all of which, if not carried out, would cause alarm and general distress amongst Rome’s enormous population.<sup>11</sup> The emotional upheavals, resulting from a jostling populace competing

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<sup>6</sup> Humphries (1999) 117.

<sup>7</sup> Cf. MacMullen (1964) 435; and especially Demandt (1965).

<sup>8</sup> Matthews (1989) 216. Cf. Lançon (2000) 50; Sabbah (2003) 76.

<sup>9</sup> Lançon (2000) 45. In the civil administration of the fourth century, the local Roman senators still expected to serve the empire, and they often held praetorian prefectures, the urban prefecture of Rome, and lower civil offices, Edbrooke (1976) 41.

<sup>10</sup> Lançon (2000) 46.

<sup>11</sup> In the fourth century the total population may have exceeded two-thirds of a million inhabitants, Jones (1966) 230.

for space and resources, would naturally create many internal problems, and the result was often outbursts that could be disastrous for both sides. Nevertheless, outside of Rome, magnates and officials also vented their spleens over matters of seemingly the utmost importance, and our historian recorded a number of these incidents, which helped to add a critical balance to the historian's portrait of the empire. Even though the prefectures outside Rome that Ammianus discussed were all eastern, this perhaps reflected his ability to obtain information on these centres more easily.

Expressions of anger in officials and magnates can be either attended by an immediate response designed to bring a situation to a head, or else that anger was in some way extinguished or left to smoulder as resentment. In the *Res Gestae*, expressions of anger can be broadly categorised into two groups: those that through their context appear to be employed to cover and overcome fear, and those that do not. A few, however, tend to be ambiguous.

**Table 5.1 Summary of anger words within the *Res Gestae* that deal specifically with magnates<sup>12</sup>**

BOOK	NUMBER OF ANGER WORDS
14	1
15	0
16	0
17	0
18	0
19	1
20	0
21	0
22	0
23	0
24	0
25	0
26	2
27	0
28	5
29	1
30	0
<b>31</b>	<b>0</b>

<sup>12</sup> Every word here indicates one episode of anger.

As the table above reveals, we only have a few instances of anger in magnates, and the majority of these come in the later books, with all but two in the reigns of Valentinian and Valens. This perhaps reflects the historian's shift away from the importance of Julian and his times, to a renewed focus on his moral perspective on the empire as a whole. The magnates came under fire from Ammianus on more than one occasion, but this did not necessarily mean that he completely disassociated himself from them. He related more to this class than to the general *populus*, but their habitual corruption recalled Tacitus.<sup>13</sup>

## THE CAUSES OF ANGER AND MAGNATES

### Summary of the Causes of Anger and Magnates

CAUSE OF ANGER	REFERENCE
Anger taken on empathically	19.12.7
Insult and outrage	14.7.11, 26.8.13, 28.1.32, 28.1.33, 28.6.19, 29.1.5
Threats	26.3.2
TOTAL 8	

### Romanus and the Causes of Anger<sup>14</sup>

The table above reveals that many instances of anger for magnates were caused through insult and outrage. This came through especially strongly at 28.6.19 when Ammianus viewed Romanus as a brutal operator in Africa, who took to the provinces like a scythe. The rage of Romanus was sparked by the perception of treachery where he revealed counter-phobic anger, wherein the individual tries to protect himself against helplessness to regain some control of events, although it does appear that more was involved.

In 365 Romanus was appointed as *comes Africae*.<sup>15</sup> Ammianus reported that he was hated by many because of his savage

<sup>13</sup> Cf. Chapter 6.

<sup>14</sup> See also for this episode, Harries (1993) 12.

<sup>15</sup> On Romanus, see *PLRE* 1.768–769. As tribune of the *schola scutariorum prima*, he had previously been dismissed and exiled by Julian in 362, 22.11.2.

disposition, (*comitis Romani*) *saevitia morum* (27.9.2),<sup>16</sup> and as the military commander he eluded a proper investigation into his refusal to guard the city of Lepcis Magna (on the Libyan coast, 130 km east of Tripolis) against barbarian raids (28.6.1–6).<sup>17</sup> At 28.6.5 Ammianus alleged that Romanus refused to aid Lepcis Magna unless he was provided with four thousand camels. As the people of Lepcis Magna could not provide these, he led his army away.<sup>18</sup> Romanus maintained his innocence until the end of this episode, claiming that the ruling was clearly biased towards the provincials.<sup>19</sup> After enquiries that lasted several years (27.9.1–3; 28.6.7–24) he was further filled with anger and resentment (*ira percitus et dolore*) when the allegedly, “powerfully backed, barefaced liar,” *notarius* Palladius<sup>20</sup> threatened to tell the emperor of the ashes of the province of Tripolis (28.6.19).<sup>21</sup> However, Romanus was able to counter Palladius’ threat through having proof of the *notarius*’ own corruption. This then caused Palladius, who was the chief supporter of Romanus,<sup>22</sup> to falsely report to Valentinian that the Tripolitanians had no cause for complaint.<sup>23</sup> Romanus’ attitude hence made Palladius feel helpless, for anger had restored Romanus’ advantage — that is he used counterphobic anger to

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<sup>16</sup> Cf. Tac *Agr* 3.

<sup>17</sup> Cf. Kelly (2004) 204.

<sup>18</sup> Barnes (1998) 182 n. 69 noted that this, “ought to have aroused suspicion long ago.”

<sup>19</sup> This levying was normal for landowners in the vicinity of the Roman frontier in Africa. Nevertheless, whatever the truth of the matter, this demand was certainly excessive. Matthews (1989) 282 suggested that Romanus was simply, “reminding the provincials of years of neglect of their legal obligations.”

<sup>20</sup> On Palladius, see Kelly (2004) 225. On *notarii*, see Lib. *Or.* 2.58; 18.131–134; Sinnigen (1959) 238–254; Jones (1964) 128; Austin & Rankow (1995) 219.

<sup>21</sup> See especially Warmington (1956) 55–64. He stated that Ammianus’ interest in these affairs stemmed from the fact that many of the victims of Romanus and his intrigues were of the curial class, 55. Cf. Matthews (1989) 385ff. Also Chapter 1.

<sup>22</sup> Warmington (1956) 59.

<sup>23</sup> However, the second embassy discovered the real truth of the matter. Cf. Warmington (1956) 59.



master excess anxiety to cope with danger.<sup>24</sup> The truth was that Romanus had been able to use his military status to extract vast sums from the provincials and was protected by allies in the civilian services.

Further, Ammianus then reported that Firmus the Moor rebelled in 372, because Romanus had used his influence at court to turn Valentinian against him, even though the charges against Firmus were false (29.5.2). Soon after the revolt Romanus was arrested (29.5.5–7, 27), and among his papers evidence was found incriminating the *notarius* Palladius in which he admitted that he had, “spoken to the sacred ears that which was not true” (28.6.26). As a consequence Palladius was arrested, but while his guards halted for prayer on the way to Constantinople, the *notarius* took the opportunity and hanged himself. According to Zosimus (4.16.3), the revolt had been caused by Romanus’ extortions in Africa. This incident highlights how an official — i.e. Romanus — could frustrate imperial power, by disobeying direct orders or through blocking reports on their activities. Indeed, Romanus did escape punishment in the end.<sup>25</sup> The cause of Romanus’ anger was the fear of treachery when his once ardent supporter Palladius threatened to tell the emperor the truth of this state of affairs. However, other factors were clearly involved, such as threats to his standing from social peers and the realisation that he could not sustain his actions in the province. This whole episode, to which Ammianus devoted a good deal of space, helps to highlight his concern with provincial administration and fiscal abuses.<sup>26</sup> Ammianus frequently accused Romanus of cupidity (27.9.1–2; 29.5.6, 50).

In summary, Romanus was threatened by the exposure of his misdeeds. His intimidation of Palladius was a further indictment of maladministration under Valentinian. This supports a modern psychological viewpoint of blame, for, “When humans can be blamed for causing a threat, outrage is a common response.”<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> *CPD*, 154.

<sup>25</sup> Kelly (2004) 219; Warmington (1956) 60.

<sup>26</sup> Cf. Frank (1972) 75.

<sup>27</sup> Jasper (1998) 410.

Romanus felt threatened by Palladius and thus anger was a natural response transmitted to correct that outrage.

### **Apronianus and the Causes of Anger**

A significant cause for anger could be the perceived threat from the black arts, which in this deeply superstitious age frightened many who, through fear of extreme punishments, as well as the professed consequences of the actual application of magic, often went to great lengths to avoid being implicated in its practice. One man who particularly despised supernatural activity was Lucius Turcius Apronianus *signo* Asterius, who was appointed *praefectus urbis* in Antioch by Julian,<sup>28</sup> and whom Ammianus described as a *iudex integer et severus* (26.3.1). Apronianus had blamed the loss of his eye on black magic and with resentment (*dolore*) he examined those accused of using magic through enforced trials in Rome (26.3.2).<sup>29</sup> The outrage of Apronianus was in accordance with anger factors found in the Introduction, “(3) tendencies to perceive ambiguous behaviour as hostile,” and, “(4) tendencies to discount the role of uncontrollable factors when attributing causality.”

Ammianus, deeply disturbed by these trials of the innocent as well as the guilty, narrated that Apronianus had Hilarinus the charioteer executed for sending his son to learn the black arts and that not even a Christian shrine, or his popularity as a charioteer, saved him from being executed (26.3.3).<sup>30</sup> This also relates to anger factor, “(2) tendencies to overlook mitigating details before attributing blame.” Though these measures may appear overly harsh, Apronianus was not acting out of judicial precedent, but was enforcing his legal rights as his position dictated, although paranoia played its role.<sup>31</sup> Anger may have been the instigator behind these

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<sup>28</sup> In January 363. Cf. Barnes (1998) 37 n.12. Barnes contested the date given of 9 December 363 or 362, found in Seeck (1919) 84, 211, Chastagnol (1962) 156–157 and Curran (2000) 195. For Apronianus, see *PLRE* 1.88–89.

<sup>29</sup> Ammianus implied that Apronianus had reached Rome by 19 March 363, 23.3.3. Cf. Barnes (1998) 39 n.15.

<sup>30</sup> Cf. Matthews (1989) 215, 419f.

<sup>31</sup> Curran (2000) 195. Barnes (1998) 114 however believed that Ammianus’ presentation of Apronianus was favourable, as Julian appointed him to his position. In support of the prefect, the historian

inquisitions, but it did not cloud his judgement to such an extent that he neglected the needs of Rome's inhabitants, the majority of whom were not suspects. Apronianus instead was selective in his targets, while subject to a fair amount of paranoia. However, one must be careful in forming an opinion of Apronianus' paranoia from a single episode, for someone may have told the prefect that he was a target, and he may have simply been responding accordingly.

### **Lampadius and the Causes of Anger**

It was said of Lampadius, who succeeded Symmachus as urban prefect that, "His vanity was such that he took it very ill (*indignanter*) if even his manner of spitting was not extolled for its unique adroitness, but nevertheless he was sometimes strict and honest" (27.3.5).<sup>32</sup> This passage was rhetorical hyperbole and illustrates arrogance. In their executive positions, frustrations such as these become all the more ridiculous. The contumacious character of C. Ceionius Rufius Volusianus *signo* Lampadius,<sup>33</sup> the urban prefect of Rome (365–366), was brought to life by Ammianus, who clearly despised him for his arrogant and conceited behaviour. Ammianus did write that Lampadius was, "sometimes strict and honest," but the rest of his account was bitterly negative.<sup>34</sup> The above remark, "smacks of the barrack-room."<sup>35</sup> Ammianus used what may simply be a figure of speech to create a negative impression in the reader

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(26.3.6) wrote, "But under the rule of Apronianus there was such a constant abundance of commodities that not the faintest murmur ever arose, as it frequently does at Rome, about any scarcity of provisions." For Apronianus' subsidies, as well as the pork levy, see Jones (1964) 702–703.

<sup>32</sup> This is a generalisation, and as such is not included in our pool of data. This is certainly rhetorical exaggeration and not meant to be taken seriously, but is an illustration of arrogance.

<sup>33</sup> On Lampadius, see *PLRE* 1.978–980. Also Matthews (1989) 417.

<sup>34</sup> Ammianus previously reported that Lampadius forced Dynamius to forge letters with Silvanus' signature and sent them to the emperor, 15.5.4–5. He was tried and acquitted of the matter, 15.5.13.

<sup>35</sup> Stuart (1908) 59. An obvious reference to the historian's time in the army.

or listener's mind. Lampadius had a history of arrogant behaviour, and that he tampered with inscriptions on buildings within Rome so that they contained his name, claiming that he had built, rather than restored them, was another element the historian found reprehensible.<sup>36</sup> Here Lampadius' anger did not have wide ramifications, but was simply a character defect (arrogance and unreasonable commendation).

### Jovinus and the Causes of Anger

It was natural for military leaders to become angry when subordinates did not follow orders, or began to make decisions for themselves that undermined the plans of their commanding officers — we have seen this fury against soldiers in the accounts of the emperor Julian in Persia.<sup>37</sup> Serving in Gaul under the emperor Valentinian, the *magister equitum* (361–369) Jovinus' angered (*iratus*) response to insubordination, when some of his men had captured an enemy king and gibbeted him without permission, was not as harsh as Julian's sometimes were (27.2.9).<sup>38</sup> Although punished, the tribune responsible was not executed. Ammianus understood that soldiers were, often commendably, prone to this type of passion. Ammianus perhaps included it to demonstrate that not all punishments need end in execution, especially in regards to soldiers upon whom the empire depended. Preserving military authority was essential, but so was restraint. Jovinus was so successful in his dealings with the Alamanni that he was rewarded with the consulship for 367.

## PRIMARY RESPONSES TO ANGER IN MAGNATES

### Summary of Primary Responses

MANIFESTATION OF ANGER	REFERENCE
Panting <sup>39</sup>	19.12.7
TOTAL 1	

<sup>36</sup> Cf. Barnes (1998) 116.

<sup>37</sup> Cf. Chapter 3.

<sup>38</sup> On Jovinus, see *PLRE* 1.463.

<sup>39</sup> This instance refers to a prolonged, rather than an instinctive state, and thus could be easily excluded from this analysis.

The above table reveals only one instance of a primary response to anger for this category on magnates. Not every primary manifestation was worth, or even necessary, recording, as this would be repetitive. It is hard to imagine any anger episode without some accompanying primary manifestations, whether reddened cheeks, the gritting of teeth, clenched fists and so on. However, what Ammianus was writing was history, rather than a literary novel. Facts, rather than elaborations were central to his narrative, although, that is not to say that Ammianus did not fail to include on many occasions a frequent number of these elaborations. In the subtleties of his historical writing, the nuances of these augmentations often blended into the background, making his subtext a configuration that is necessarily brought to light by researchers today.

### **Paulus and the Primary Manifestations of Anger**

The *notarii* were a select group of officials who on occasion received rather a bad press from our historian. In Ammianus' accounts, it was during the reigns of his more disreputable emperors that these figures played their greatest roles. Thus in the *Res Gestae* Ammianus described how Gaudentius acted as *notarius* in Gaul to spy upon the Caesar Julian (17.9.7). At treason trials conducted by the Caesar Gallus *notarii* were present in order to report back to the emperor Constantius (14.9.3).

At 19.12.7 Ammianus portrayed an individual who could not be more despised. The *notarius* Paulus was an arresting figure, sly, calculating and full of hate. Ammianus, in loaded terms, described the notary as he sought bloodshed and retribution for his master, the emperor Constantius. Indeed, after Gallus' execution, Paulus had informed on the friends of the Caesar (15.3.3–4). He had also informed Constantius of alleged plots by the supporters of Silvanus (15.6.1). Ammianus deliberately used terms to describe the notary that would evoke a sympathetic reaction for the victims of Paulus, for he used an animal-like image of Paulus, as panting or breathing hard (*anbelitus*), the action was fast moving, it was full of danger and it reduced the notary to something almost non-human in his deadly enmity — an obvious imputation by Ammianus, which highlighted a disposition, rather than an episode of anger.

Next, he described the false accusations (*dataque calumniae*). Given full licence by Constantius meant that those who were implicated for possible treason were, according to the historian, innocent and, “the fate of all defendants in treason trials under Constantius depended virtually on Paulus’s nod.”<sup>40</sup> He did not use the term *innocens*, yet the implication is obvious, for he described them as, *iuxta nobiles et obscuri*. In Ammianus’ mind, these were certainly not individuals who would destabilize the system by plotting against the emperor. Finally, we have the agonising pains inflicted upon the “innocent.” These men and women were crushed (*adflixerant*) by their chains, whilst others succumbed (*consumpserunt*) to the rigours of being kept confined in close quarters, a consequence of Paulus’ noxious rage which pushed him on. The message was clear: everyone was exposed to, and could be accused of, treason, no matter how flawlessly they had led their lives. The driving force here was fear of treason,<sup>41</sup> and Paulus’ over-zealous loyalty. This illustrates Paulus’ tendency to ‘rage’ against the ‘enemies’ of Constantius, as well as how damaging such fervour could be, for the cause was his desire to serve Constantius well. The point here is that Paulus was depicted as anger-driven and, though I have included it here as a primary manifestation because of Ammianus’ colourful addition of “panting,” it is probably more of a secondary response because of the cognitive element involved in motivating Paulus against Constantius’ ‘enemies’. The consequence therefore fits this definition of Aristotle (*Rh.* 1.11) that, “Revenge, too, is pleasant; it is pleasant to get anything that it is painful to fail to get, and angry people suffer extreme pain when they fail to get their revenge; but they enjoy the prospect of getting it.” Furthermore Aristotle defined anger as, “a desire, accompanied by pain, for a perceived revenge, on account of a perceived slight on the part of people who are not fit to slight one or one’s own” (*Rh.* 2.2.1378a31–3). Seneca also spoke of remedies for anger. One of which was that, “it is sweet to return

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<sup>40</sup> Seager (1986) 25.

<sup>41</sup> *Maiestas* was a heinous crime to the Romans, and was, “defined as anything which damaged the ‘majesty’, or interests, not only of the emperor, but also of the Roman state in general,” Harries (1998) 128. The notaries acted as the tools of the emperors in seeking out these cases of treason. Cf. *Dig.* 48.4.1.

pain for pain” (*De ira* 2.32). Paulus allowed himself to be led by anger, and that was what made him such a deadly enemy.

## SECONDARY RESPONSES TO ANGER IN MAGNATES

### Summary of Secondary Responses

SECONDARY RESPONSE	REFERENCE
Informing on others	28.1.32, 28.6.19
Punishment of military figures	27.2.9
Punishment of those suspected of criminal activities	19.12.7, 26.3.2
Revenge against those who are seen to be betrayers	26.8.13, 28.1.33
Seeking information on others	29.1.5
<b>TOTAL 8</b>	

### Maximinus and Secondary Responses to Anger

Awareness of corruption and treasonous behaviour in the governing classes plagued the thoughts of the emperors, ever wary of potential threats to their own positions. This explained Valentinian’s reliance upon Maximinus of Sopianae<sup>42</sup> and his resorting to methods of “terrorism” (violence and intimidation) to maintain control. During 369 to 371, Valentinian had a major falling out with the senatorial order in Rome. Previously he had shown respect towards this order, but in 369 charges of poisoning were brought before the prefect Olybrius. As Valentinian was ill at the time, he referred the matter to his deputy, Maximinus, whose inquiries led him to suspect some of those within the elite classes of practising magic. Persecution of the senatorial class ensued which has been described as, “a veritable period of terror.”<sup>43</sup>

Anger and cruelty often spread from the emperors to their subordinates, or vice versa, thus, “Valentinian tended to harshness, a harshness increased by his bitterly seething anger, until eventually,

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<sup>42</sup> For Maximinus, see *PLRE* 1.577–578; Jones (1964) 141. For his origin and career, see Ammianus 28.1.5f.

<sup>43</sup> Lançon (2000) 50.

egged on by Maximinus, he was carried away on its tide.”<sup>44</sup> Valentinian’s personality led him to constantly urge, “his officials to punish even venial faults harshly.”<sup>45</sup> Fuelled by angry suspicions, Valentinian and Valens sought out anyone and everyone who was said to transgress the law, regardless of status.<sup>46</sup> Here the behaviour of the emperors reflected the words of Aristotle, “To passion and anger are due all acts of revenge” (*Rh.* 1.10). This also fits in with the modern behaviourists’ point of view that, “The experience of anger can be defined as an individuals’ chronic internal experience of anger, irritation, suspicion, and annoyance.”<sup>47</sup> This anger can lead to these outcomes, and this applies to a number of emperors and magnates described by Ammianus.

Maximinus’ enthusiasm for carrying out the emperor’s wishes caused him to create many enemies. Aginatus, the *vicarius urbis Romae*,<sup>48</sup> a long-standing rival of Maximinus, was indignant that these trials were to be led by a man who, as the *praefectus annonae*,<sup>49</sup> was lower in rank to him (28.1.32), “and resentful because Maximinus, in conducting examinations, was preferred to him by Olybrius, although he himself was vice-prefect of Rome” (*dolensque in examinandis causis Maximinum ab Olybrio sibi praelatum, cum esset ipse vicarius Romae*).<sup>50</sup>

In 368, in an attempt to undermine Maximinus, Aginatus took advantage of a supposed insult made by the *praefectus annonae* against Sextus Petronius Probus,<sup>51</sup> and subsequently sent the prefect a letter, informing him how to eliminate Maximinus. However, Probus betrayed Aginatus and delivered the letter

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<sup>44</sup> Cf. Frank (1972) 76. Cf. Joh. Malalas, *Chron.* 13.31.

<sup>45</sup> Seager (1986) 21. Cf. Barnes (1998) 108.

<sup>46</sup> Cf. *Cod. Theo.* 9.35.1; *Cod. Just.* 9.8.4. Cf. 9.19.2. Magic: 9.16.6. A.M. 19.12.17; Garnsey (1968) 151.

<sup>47</sup> Schum, *et al.* (2003) 399.

<sup>48</sup> On Aginatus see *PLRE* 1.20–30.

<sup>49</sup> The prefect of the *annona* was responsible for provisions brought into Rome. The *annona* and the prefect of the *vigiles*, whose duties were night policing and fire fighting, were subordinate to the urban prefect, Lançon (2000) 46.

<sup>50</sup> Cf. Barnes (1998) 245.

<sup>51</sup> On the career of Probus, see Cameron (1985) 164–182; 27.1.1; 30.5.4–11. *PLRE* Probus 5. Cf. Barnes (1998) 40 n.17, 117f.



straight to Maximinus himself (28.1.33). This revelation made the *praefectus annonae* fall into such a blaze of anger (*homo ferus exarsit*) that he focussed his rage on Aginatus.

During this long and complicated episode, the enormous rage (*indignissime*) of Aginatus, caused by the fear of a perceived treachery, led him to insult Maximinus' closest friend, the late Victorinus, claiming that he had been bribed to achieve judicial decisions from Maximinus. He then threatened to bring a suit against Victorinus' widow, Anepsia. In 375/6, Maximinus was at last successful in destroying his enemy. Aginatus was arrested and executed on charges of adultery and black magic (28.1.50).<sup>52</sup> This complex series of events would later see the death of Maximinus.<sup>53</sup> Anger here was a response to very real treachery, fuelled by jealousy, a deadly combination, which led to the deaths of both protagonists. Maximinus was performing the duties that he had been ordered to, yet these manoeuvrings in Rome caused a great deal of friction in elite society,<sup>54</sup> and others sought to destroy him for being successful and becoming the favourite of the emperor. There was no sympathy from the historian, and his language was deliberately structured to show how self-destructive anger could be.

### Procopius and Secondary Responses to Anger

When the retired general Arbitio failed to support the usurper Procopius, the new emperor (Augustus 365–366)<sup>55</sup> apparently felt that Arbitio was using his ill health merely as an excuse not to see him (26.8.13). Procopius desperately needed support, and he understood Arbitio's attitude as a vote of no confidence and a public disgrace that he neither needed nor relished, for he wanted support from everywhere. Procopius' indignant (*indignatus*) response was to clear Arbitio's house of all its possessions. This

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<sup>52</sup> Aginatus and Anepsia were both executed by Maximinus, 28.1.52–56.

<sup>53</sup> He was beheaded by Gratian early in his reign, 28.1.57. Symmachus, *Ep.* 10.2.2–3; *Or.* 4.11–12.

<sup>54</sup> Brandt (1999) 93.

<sup>55</sup> For Procopius, see *PLRE* 1.742–743. *AM* 26.6.4–5; Zos. 4.5–8; Socrates, *Hist. Eccl.* 4.3–8. Also Austin (1972a); Till (1974/5) 75–83; Blockley (1975) 55–62; Austin (1979) 88–92; Matthews (1988) 191–197.

action, which was both humiliating and predatory, forced Arbitio from retirement. This may have been a demonstration of Procopius' force and a test of Arbitio's loyalties. Arbitio was not easily intimidated, and he became furious at Procopius and was eager for his downfall. Arbitio, at the urging of Valens, as one of Constantine's eminent generals,<sup>56</sup> presented himself before one of the armies of Procopius. With his "impeccable record"<sup>57</sup> he dealt a blow to Procopius by securing the defection of one of his leading men, the general Gomoarius (26.9.6). Eventually, Procopius' army would fracture to such point that the majority of his men would abandon him.<sup>58</sup> Procopius' response was self-destructive, even if understandable.

Looking at this event in more detail, Procopius could not have chosen a worse figure to direct his indignation towards, for Arbitio was intelligent and resourceful, or else he would not have survived so long in both military and political fields. When one takes a closer look at the career of Arbitio, it suddenly comes as no surprise that he reacted as he did, thus securing the demise of the usurper. For example, when Constantius decided to remove Gallus from his position, he was opposed by two men, the eunuch Eusebius, the *praepositus sacri cubiculi*,<sup>59</sup> and Arbitio, the *magister equitum in praesenti*, who were part of what Ammianus called, *versabulum adulatorum* (groups of fickle courtiers, 14.11.2). According to Ammianus, Arbitio was said, *ad insidiandum acer et flagrans*. This portrayal was naturally in response to the poisonous slander incited against his hero Ursicinus, whom Arbitio, along with others, was intriguing against. Ammianus did not share the sympathies for Arbitio that the military did, for very personal reasons.

Further on at 15.2.3, Ammianus contrasted the stoic behaviour of General Ursicinus and that of the scheming Arbitio and his cronies, "In the face of this the noble hero (Ursicinus) remained unshaken; he took care not to adopt too humble a posture..." (*sed contra accidentia vir magnanimous stabat immobilis, ne se proieceret abiectus cavens...*). Ammianus used wild animal imagery here

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<sup>56</sup> *CAH*<sup>2</sup> 13, 91.

<sup>57</sup> Ammianus himself held a contrary view to this. For example, his incompetence against the Alamanni in 355, 15.4.

<sup>58</sup> Matthews (1989) 283.

<sup>59</sup> Cf. Jones (1964) 127, 367, 568.

to describe Arbitio as, “a snake which lies hidden in a hole in the ground watching for individual passers-by whom it then suddenly attacks” (15.12.4). In other words, Arbitio was not one to deal with lightly (cf. 15.5.2).

In these and other incidents, Arbitio was presented as a man imbued with all the traits of a conspirator. He was dangerous and this made Procopius’ behaviour even more ludicrous and self-destructive, as he tackled an unforgiving individual who clearly outmanoeuvred him both in cunning and scheming.

### Fortunatianus and Secondary Responses to Anger

Another response to allegations of betrayal for magnates was to seek out those who were informers and to have the accused examined according to the extent of the magnate/official’s powers. In a tangled web of corruption which Ammianus revealed at 29.1.5, the *comes rei privatae* Fortunatianus,<sup>60</sup> whom Ammianus described in office as, “notorious as being a tiresome dunner” (*molestus ille flagitator* tr. J.C. Rolfe), was aroused to a mad degree of wrath (*percitus*) when the two *palatini*, Anatolius<sup>61</sup> and Spudasius, were charged by a certain Procopius (not the usurper) with having made an attempt on his life, as well as for practising magic (29.1.5). Fortunatianus had been extracting money from these two officials, which they, in their turn, had been embezzling from the treasury. The count’s response to duplicity and the plot on his life was to find out information on the matter of this scheme. He therefore handed over the *notarius* Palladius (allegedly a sorcerer), as well as Heliodorus (a reader of horoscopes), to the court of the praetorian prefecture so that they might be forced to tell what they knew about the matter. This incident then led to further accusations and the discovery of further (alleged) treachery against the emperor Valens.

This episode revealed more than the accusations of one man against others, fuelled by greed and anger, for it went much higher than that, to the extremes of imperial administration. This led to further trials for treason, this time in fear-ridden Antioch. The

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<sup>60</sup> For Fortunatianus, see *PLRE* 1.369.

<sup>61</sup> Anatolius had been proconsul of Constantinople in 354. In 357 he was made praetorian prefect of Illyricum, Kelly (2004) 194.

response of Fortunatianus was beneficial for the emperor, for it revealed treachery that he was unaware of, even though it was perhaps not as calamitous as the emperor believed. It was a typical example of how seriously magnates took attempts on their lives, although most people, regardless of their status, would take such charges seriously, especially if there was a good motive.

## CONSEQUENCES OF ANGER AND MAGNATES

### Summary of the Consequences for Selves and Others

CONSEQUENCE FOR SELVES	REFERENCE
Death of the magnate	26.8.13, 28.1.32
Consequence for Others	Reference
Causing fear in others	28.1.32
Punishment of others for magic practices	26.3.2
Punishment of others for treason	19.12.7
The investigation of others	29.1.5
The punishment of military figures	27.2.9
The removal of property from others	26.8.13
Threats made towards others because of corruption	28.6.19
TOTAL 9	

As discussed in the introduction, officials in the fourth century held a special role, for they were generally closer to the people than were those of imperial status, who were rarely seen. Magnates, especially in official spheres, were regarded with a special status. The *populus* could often see these figures and even voice their demands in person, though often in a group context as discussed in Chapter Four. Therefore, the decisions and objections of a magnate/official could have a very immediate and direct consequence for those within close proximity. As we can see from the table above, there are very direct consequences for individuals and groups when a magnate focuses his anger towards them, such as the punishment

of those for practising magic or treason. However, anger on two occasions led to the actual demise of the magnate.

### Paulus and the Consequences of Anger

The punishment of others was a frequent, rational and inevitable consequence of a magnate's anger, especially when this emotion manifested itself directly against those who were, or were thought to be, the cause of a particular offence. Ammianus reported that the deeply suspicious emperor, Constantius II, relied chiefly on two officials to keep him informed. These were the *notarius* (353–361) Paulus “the Chain,” who earned the nickname through his ability to entrap victims with his accusations, as well as to link one person to another in a chain of charges (15.3.4), and the *rationalis* Mercurius, or “Count of Dreams,” so named because of the enormous reach of his intelligence network.<sup>62</sup> Furthermore, there was Rufinus, who also played an important part in Constantius' intrigues.

In 355 an *agens in rebus*, Gaudentius, reported alleged treasonable statements of the governor of Pannonia Secunda<sup>63</sup> to the chief of staff of the praetorian prefecture, Rufinus (cf. 16.8.3).<sup>64</sup> In all haste, Rufinus was said to have personally brought the charges in front of Constantius (15.3.7ff.).<sup>65</sup> As a consequence of his prompt action, the suspicious Constantius held Rufinus from that time on in imperial favour. In 356–7 (16.8.7) Rufinus himself was condemned to death when it was discovered that it was in fact he who was the instigator of the whole affair.

Returning to Paulus, in 359 Paulus was said to be furiously angry (*Paulus funesti furoris ... plenus*) when he was sent off to the Orient (19.12.7) where, “an opportunity for villainy,”<sup>66</sup> was presented to him. Here, Paulus took on board the anger of Constantius when the emperor sent him to conduct trials at Scythopolis in Palestine, in order to investigate matters of magic

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<sup>62</sup> Cf. Kelly (2004) 220.

<sup>63</sup> An imperial province, for its size and towns see Ptol. 2.14 and 15. See also de Jonge (1948) 44–45.

<sup>64</sup> For Rufinus see *PLRE* 1.198; Edbrooke (1976) 43, 49.

<sup>65</sup> Cf. Sinnigen (1959) 245.

<sup>66</sup> Barnes (1998) 91.

and treason, after questions submitted in writing to the god Besa had been found in Upper Egypt.<sup>67</sup> In order to impress the emperor, Paulus pursued these investigations vigorously to find out who had written these questions. Paulus then brought the accused to trial before Modestus the *comes Orientis*.<sup>68</sup> As a consequence of these activities, Paulus was able to condemn many individuals for treason. Ammianus wrote of this as a travesty of justice, where no one, no matter his rank or origin, could escape torture and execution if he were accused (19.12.7ff.). However, as Matthews pointed out, only four were actually charged, two of whom were exiled, and the other two acquitted. Also, there was nothing unusual about these trials and their conduct, for they were well within the laws of the fourth century.<sup>69</sup> In other words then, Paulus' anger was a confected pretext that Ammianus implied, and not genuine outrage, so the picture of a raging fiend is overdrawn.

Paulus was particularly effective in cases involving the suppression of groups and individuals. His infamous activities after the usurpation of Magnentius, the trials after the execution of Gallus and the suppression of Silvanus are particularly memorable (14.5.6ff. 15.3.4; 15.6.1). Indeed, it was his method of pursuing these cases, rather than the actual trials themselves, which concerned the historian. Eventually, Paulus would die as a result of his unpopularity. In truth, he was burnt alive at the stake during Julian's purge of palace officials at Constantinople, during the Commission of Chalcedon in 361/2 (22.3.11).<sup>70</sup>

Nonetheless, prior to that, many suffered through threats, torture and occasionally execution, because of his enthusiasm to carry out the wishes of Constantius. Ammianus places some of the blame onto the emotion of anger, which fuelled the emperor and subsequently the notary's vicious purges. Fear could also be heavily implicated here, because it led to the desire for self-preservation, and it was taken to such extremes that it destroyed the lives of many. These trials were significant for all in proximity, for a climate of fear ensured that each individual kept a close eye on his neighbour. Also the fact that having made so many deadly enemies

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<sup>67</sup> Cf. Matthews (1989) 92, 217; Barnes (1998) 91.

<sup>68</sup> Barnes (1998) 91. For the career of Modestus, see Jones (1964) 141.

<sup>69</sup> Matthews (1989) 217, 218.

<sup>70</sup> Cf. Lib. *Or.* 13.42, 18.152.

meant that Paulus could not rest. Clearly Ammianus exaggerated this account and anger played only a subsidiary role in this rampage. While anger at treason was present, fear played a larger role.

COMMENTS BY AMMIANUS

Summary of Comments by Ammianus

COMMENT	REFERENCE
Wild animal imagery	28.1.33
TOTAL 1	

Ammianus’ Comments on the Anger of Maximinus

Despite their often bad behaviour and the negative comments he makes, it is apparent that overall the historian was a supporter of the senatorial order in Rome, with whom Maximinus fell out of favour during the trials (28.1.9–10, 31). Because of his respect for the traditional senatorial order, Ammianus’ language plainly indicated that he despised Maximinus for his conduct towards these elites. In describing his early career, the historian wrote, “Lastly, while he was still worming his way through inferior posts like a snake in the earth he was not strong enough to cause mischief on a large scale” (28.1.7). Of this, Barnes wrote, “The unfairness of this characterisation leaps off the page,”<sup>71</sup> as Maximinus’ rise to power was not unique. Further on, Ammianus makes another serpent comparison, when he compared Maximinus’ rage with the reaction of a snake, crushed by some unknown person (28.1.33).

When we contrast these descriptions to those in Chapter Two, which compare barbarians to wild beasts, we see how Ammianus used his skills in rhetoric to dehumanise and separate the cultured world from the barbarity of subterranean characters.<sup>72</sup> Ammianus’ audience would also picture Maximinus as a terrible figure; he had been injured and responded with anger and violence.

<sup>71</sup> Barnes (1998) 108.

<sup>72</sup> Cf. Matthews (1989) 258. Of Maximinus, Ammianus (28.1.10) also wrote, *ut saepe faciunt amphitheatre ferae, diffractis tandem solutae posticis*.

It is easy to take this imagery on board without question, but it is much harder to see some good in Maximinus.

## CONCLUSION

In Roman society, when a member of the poorer classes felt he was being unjustly served, others usually supported his anger, and therefore they gained strength through their comradeship. Often a magnate, on the other hand, had to deal with issues as his position dictated or else accusations of corruption could be made against him. Some, like Paulus, enjoyed the personal support of the emperor. A magnate could control others to protect him, but if there was enough opposition he could lose the confidence of the emperor, be overthrown, deserted or killed, even by those he once believed to be on his side — although this was rare. Fears that affected the Roman emperors, such as of treachery, black magic and corruption, also greatly concerned the magnates (as well as all other classes) living in Ammianus' times. As the account of Apronianus showed, the fourth century was a time still deeply imbued in superstition and the belief that one could be harmed by the black arts. Of the eighteen trials and investigations that Ammianus mentioned, a number of these were caused by the paranoid atmosphere invoked by suspicion of magic, although inquisitions concerning adultery and treason were conducted jointly.<sup>73</sup> It was an extremely dangerous period for all social groups, be they aristocrats or lowly slaves, and no one was safe from the threat of torture and execution. When the inquisitions came to Antioch, where Ammianus may have even dwelt at the time, he related events of the most appalling nature. It is possible that he personally witnessed the effects they had on his acquaintances and other members of his own social order. Although there were clearly emendations to his accounts, it is very likely that Ammianus' portrayals were not too far from the truth.

In the causes of anger, each magnate naturally looked out for his own welfare, as their anger was caused either through perceived or real threats to their social and/or official positions, or else threats to the emperor. However, character defects must also play their part. The behaviour of the majority of these magnates, not meeting with the approval of our historian, led to hyperbole.

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<sup>73</sup> Blockley (1975) 104, and ns 1, 4.



Ammianus despised cruelty, especially against those whom he identified or sympathised with in some manner. He saw the conducting of some trials and inquisitions as illegal and excessive and vilified those responsible. Additionally, these instances conveyed the sentiment of many of those who, like Ammianus, held a provincial perspective and understood the impact the elite could have both within and beyond the eternal city.<sup>74</sup>

From Ammianus' often biased accounts, it appears that magnates were subjected to the same pressures as their predecessors, but as the emperors allowed more officials to come into the system, naturally conflicts would result. The *honestiores* would vie for power and subvert their peers in frequent struggles to be on top. This, along with the instability caused by usurpers, the trials and the disintegration of trust, meant that Ammianus presented his audience with an extremely negative portrait of fourth century elite society. On this theme, for example, he told the tale of Romanus and his corruption, mingled with further corruption from Palladius, who both sought to destroy each other's reputation, as well as a similar plot by Aginatus against Maximinus that would eventually see the destruction of both.

Finally, anger in fourth century magnates had the potential to affect almost everyone in their sphere of influence. Although Ammianus naturally did not put as much focus on this area as he did on the larger picture, such as accounts of anger in the army or the Roman emperors, he still presented us with certain descriptions of anger in magnates that, because of their potentially wide ranging focus, were important to record as negative examples.

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<sup>74</sup> Extortion and intimidation were still widespread in late antiquity, and thus the object of legislation, MacMullen (1988) 85.

## 6. TACITUS AND AMMIANUS ON ANGER

quem hominem, qua ira, quo spiritu!

(Cicero *Q. Fr.* 1.2)

### INTRODUCTION

In scope, magnitude and characterisations, there are remarkable similarities between Ammianus and Tacitus, which this study, focusing on anger, reveals. Tacitus wrote from a senatorial perspective, mainly using senatorial sources to build his accounts. Ammianus also used senatorial sources, but built upon them with inquiries and examinations from all ranks and backgrounds.<sup>1</sup> As well as this, the extant portions of the *Annals* and the *Histories* deal with events before Tacitus' time or his active participation in affairs, whereas Ammianus, in his extant text, writes about contemporary events, and this must be taken into account when making comparisons.<sup>2</sup> The themes and content of Tacitus' *Annals* and *Histories*, his major historical works, make them the most comparable to the *Res Gestae* of Ammianus. Although there are certain differences between the portrayals of individual characters and groups, there is much to be gained from a comparative analysis of the two authors' representations of anger in the Roman military, emperors, magnates, barbarians and the *populus*. This chapter examines the similarities and differences between the two authors' portrayal of characters and how this affected their depictions of anger. The manner in which Ammianus portrayed events and

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<sup>1</sup> Thompson (1969) 126f.

<sup>2</sup> Leon (1949) 396.

characters, along with his myriad of themes, was close in approach to that of Tacitus, and the *Res Gestae* is also generally regarded as a chronological continuation of Tacitus.<sup>3</sup> Ammianus was writing something that came somewhat close to the achievements of Tacitus, that is, a history on the grand scale.<sup>4</sup> It was also, in what remains of his work, a contemporary perspective for a contemporary audience. Famously at the conclusion of his book, Ammianus maintained that he had written the truth as far as he was able:

These events, from the principate of the emperor Nerva to the death of Valens, I, a former soldier and a Greek, have set forth to the measure of my ability, without ever (I believe) consciously venturing to debase through silence or through falsehood a work whose aim was the truth.

This need to speak the truth had already been emphasised by Tacitus, who at the beginning of his *Annales* wrote that one must write without “partiality or hatred” (*sine ira et studio*). Certainly, Ammianus was very much aware of his predecessor’s writing and moralistic outlook and applied it to his own work.

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<sup>3</sup> Cf. 31.16.9, *a principatu Caesaris Nervae exorsus*. See for example, Thompson (1942) 130; Wilshire (1973) 221–227. This is supported by Rolfe (1939) xv; Thompson (1947) 17; Syme (1968a) 216. St. Jerome, Ammianus’ contemporary, revealed that the *Histories* and *Annals* of Tacitus together comprise 30 books, Jerome, *Comment. Ad Zach.* 3.14; Sabbah (2003) 48. Cf. Oliver (1951) 259. Matthews (1989) 32 disagreed with the widely held viewpoint that Ammianus was writing an extension of Tacitus. For a contrasting view see for example Syme (1968a) 7, “The history which Ammianus wrote, continuing Tacitus and in emulation, *a principatu Caesaris Nervae exorsus*, as he states in conclusion (XXXI.16.9), comprised thirty one books.” Cf. Blockley (1973) 62–78, Auerbach (1953) 50–76.

<sup>4</sup> Camus (1967) 73.

**Table 6.1. Totals and Anger Words per 1000 Words  
in the Major Works of Ammianus and Tacitus**

ANGER WORD	AMMIANUS	TACITUS TOTAL
Accendo	6 (24)	10 (52)
Ardor	1 (39)	0 (20)
Commoveo	1 (25)	2 (28)
Dolor	8 (28)	6 (59)
Efferō	12 (20)	0 (22)
Exardesco	4 (16)	3 (16)
Excandesco	2 (5)	0 (0)
Fel	1 (1)	0 (0)
Ferveo	1 (10)	0 (17)
Flagro	3 (40)	0 (31)
Fremo	3 (6)	11 (18)
Frendo	6 (7)	0 (0)
Furo	1 (10)	3 (11)
Furor	7 (23)	8 (23)
Indignatio	9 (11)	1 (2)
Indignor	6 (9)	1 (1)
Indignus	3 (16)	0 (9)
Infrendo	3 (3)	0 (0)
Inrito	1 (5)	0 (52)
Ira	36 (42)	56 (98)
Iracundia	4 (7)	7 (9)
Irascor	11 (19)	3 (7)
Percio	9 (41)	0 (0)
Rabies	4 (19)	2 (6)
Saevio	12 (27)	3 (25)
Subirascor	1 (1)	0 (0)
Tumor	1 (19)	0 (0)
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>156 (463)</b>	<b>116 (489)</b>
<b>PER 1000 WORDS</b>	<b>2.79 (8.29)</b>	<b>2.49 (10.52)</b>

Numbers in brackets indicate the number of times a word occurs in each work. These include those words not directly related to anger, to a specific group or character, in a hypothetical statement or are simply too ambiguous to include in our study. For example, *dolor* can relate to grief as well as anger. The non-bracketed numbers refer to specific groups or individuals who display anger as is evident in the works. There are a total of 87 anger episodes in Tacitus, and anger words do cluster in episodes. Some anger subjects are not discussed in this chapter for reasons of space. These include women, divinities and unnamed individuals.

Table 6.1 shows the varying incidence of individual anger words, and their combined frequency, expressed as an occurrence per 1,000 words. The size for the sample for collecting material was from 55,820 words of the *Res Gestae* of Ammianus, 35,091 for the *Annals* and 11,378 for the *Histories* of Tacitus. Through collating this information and by showing the frequency of anger words per 1,000 words, the totals are revealed for each anger word used in this sample.

This table reveals a marked difference between the two authors' use of terms that denote anger. For example, as will be shown later on in this chapter, *ira* was applied to the Roman military, particularly in Ammianus' *Res Gestae* and the *Histories* of Tacitus. Although there were a number of significant instances in the *Annals* of the Roman soldiers displaying *ira*, Tacitus placed a far greater emphasis on the *ira* of magnates, whereas as we have seen in Chapter 5 of this book, the anger of magnates was a relatively minor concern for Ammianus in the overall picture. As a term that exclusively denoted anger, Ammianus and Tacitus used *ira* in a wide range of contexts, and it is unmistakable in its meaning.<sup>5</sup>

Table 6.1 also reveals that in Tacitus' works he placed far less emphasis on the term *indignatio* than Ammianus did, who used this term in relation to a wide variety of groups, including emperors, barbarians and the Roman military. In fact, in the works of Tacitus, there are no specific anger instances of *indignatio* in the *Annals*, and in the *Histories*, *indignatio* in relation to specific instances of anger

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<sup>5</sup> For example in Vergil *Aen.* 6.384, *tumida ex ira tum corda residunt*.

occurs only once.<sup>6</sup> The lack of this term does not mean that indignation is not implied, for there are a number of instances of anger within the *Histories* and *Annals* related to insult and threats. In comparison, Ammianus uses the term *indignatio* nine times to discuss fury. For example, at 17.1.9 he elaborated on the *indignatio* of the Roman soldiers, whose way forward had been deliberately blockaded by the Alamanni.

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From an analysis of modern-day studies on Tacitus, it is apparent that anger in the writings of this historian has not been the focus of much research. Apart from Harris in his *Restraining Rage*, where he discusses many ancient authors' views on anger including Tacitus, we have Traub who, in an article, examined the historian's use of *ferocia*, especially with the sense of *parrhêsia*. According to Tacitus, *ferocia* generally has a sense of boldness and outspokenness, rather than anger. The limits of enquiry with this keyword for this book are apparent. In a useful study, Williams looked at the occurrences of *furor* in the mutiny narratives of Tacitus and Ammianus.<sup>7</sup> And furthermore, Woodman in his 2006 article, "Mutiny and Madness: Tacitus and Annals 1.16–49," examined Tacitus' use of *rabies* and *furor* in the mutiny narratives of *Annals* I.

There are also a number of useful studies by other modern historians. Fletcher found thirty-two instances of literary influence by Tacitus upon the works of Ammianus, almost more than any other historian he looked at.<sup>8</sup> Because of this, it is astonishing that the historian never mentioned Tacitus directly or indirectly, even though there are so many common elements (though he might have mentioned him in the lost books).<sup>9</sup> Both came from similar, provincial backgrounds and both were typically moralistic.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> *Indignatio* was a significant term for at least one contemporary of Tacitus, and was the "driving force" of the first two books of the *Satires*, 1–6, of Juvenal, Braund (1997) 68.

<sup>7</sup> Williams (1997).

<sup>8</sup> Fletcher (1937) 278–395.

<sup>9</sup> Camus (1967) 70; Wilshire (1973) 222.

<sup>10</sup> Wilshire (1973) 222–223. However, Ammianus was not concerned with the same philosophic or emotional issues found in Tacitus, 225. See also Martin (1981) 217, for Tacitus' moral concern.

However, between the first and fourth century, significant changes had occurred in the Empire, so that the despotism of Tacitus' time was no longer the main concern for Ammianus.<sup>11</sup> Ammianus' criticism moved beyond those emperors whom he despised, and he targeted also the nobility and the senatorial elite in Rome (14.5; 28.4.6–27). Tacitus' main concerns whilst writing the *Annals* were: "Republic and Empire, senator and emperor."<sup>12</sup> For Ammianus, the idea of a restoration of the Republic was a long forgotten dream of the old senatorial elite in Rome, and no thoughts of resurrecting it permeated his century. The senate did play a minor part in his writings, and certainly his association with this class, particularly the provincial senatorial elite in Antioch, meant that he criticised those (deceased) emperors and Caesars who did not satisfy the needs of this order. For Ammianus, it was frequently the outside forces which threatened the stability of the Empire that caused most anxiety, although other concerns regularly came into play. Ammianus' *Res Gestae* dealt with his understanding of the central problems of his time: barbarians and Empire, senator and emperor.<sup>13</sup>

The common themes between Ammianus and Tacitus offer scope for a limited, but still useful, content analysis of their portrayals of anger. The approach that this book applies attempts to make a limited comparison, and it will seek to avoid making hazardous assumptions that Ammianus was continually borrowing on Tacitus, something that cannot be proven.<sup>14</sup> Through this method, that is the collating of specific anger words and examining the context they are presented in, it is possible to make a detailed examination of the types of anger portrayals both historians made use of.

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<sup>11</sup> Wilshire (1973) 224.

<sup>12</sup> Syme (1970) 129.

<sup>13</sup> Cf. Thompson (1947) 132.

<sup>14</sup> "While Ammianus is a continuator of Tacitus, he is neither an imitator nor his epigone," Sabbah (2003) 59.

## TACITUS AND THE ANGER OF THE ROMAN MILITARY

Ann. 1.18 — furor	Hist. 1.81 — furor, ira
Ann. 1.20 — ira	Hist. 1.82 — ira
Ann. 1.31 — rabies	Hist. 2.6 — fremo
Ann. 1.32 — saevio	Hist. 2.13 — ira
Ann. 1.35 — furo	Hist. 2.28 — fremo
Ann. 1.40 — furo	Hist. 2.43 — dolor
Ann. 1.42 — furo	Hist. 2.44 — ira, fremo
Ann. 1.45 — ira	Hist. 2.46 — furor
Ann. 1.49 — saevio, furor	Hist. 2.65 — iracundia
Ann. 1.62 — ira	Hist. 2.69 — fremo
Ann. 1.68 — ira	Hist. 2.86 — dolor, ira
Ann. 2.13 — ira	Hist. 3.7 — ira
Ann. 3.45 — fremo	Hist. 3.10 — ira, fremo
Ann. 12.39 — ira, accendo	Hist. 3.14 — dolor
Ann. 15.4 — ira, accendo	Hist. 3.22 — ira
Ann. 15.66 — accendo	Hist. 3.31 — exardesco
Hist. 1.8 — irascor, indignor	Hist. 3.71 — furor
Hist. 1.9 — furor	Hist. 4.2 — ira
Hist. 1.25 — ira	Hist. 4.25 — iracundia
Hist. 1.32 — irascor	Hist. 4.35 — fremo
Hist. 1.55 — fremo	Hist. 4.36 — ira
Hist. 1.58 — exardesco, iracundia	Hist. 4.72 — ira
Hist. 1.63 — furor, ira, rabies	Hist. 5.15 — ira
<b>Total number of anger words = 56 (39 episodes)</b>	

The extent of Tacitus' military experience is unknown, however, like Ammianus, he was greatly interested in matters involving the armed forces,<sup>15</sup> including the emotional reactions that the soldiers

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<sup>15</sup> Syme (1970) 128 suggested that Tacitus perhaps was in command of a legion during the early to mid nineties.



and their commanding officers exhibited.<sup>16</sup> Tacitus researched and listened to reports of the lives of the soldiers, and perhaps had firsthand experience of their behaviour and reactions. If Ammianus — to use an expression of Cicero (*Acad.* 2.135; *Tusc.* 4.43) — regarded anger as *cos fortitudinis*,<sup>17</sup> he judged from the perspective of the experienced officer, a perspective that Tacitus also took occasionally (*Hist.* 2.77).<sup>18</sup>

It is apparent that Tacitus gave anger as much, if not more, importance in military matters than Ammianus. Tacitus was well aware that anger had definite outcomes in a military context. Like Ammianus, Tacitus understood how anger could motivate Roman troops to courage (*virtus*).<sup>19</sup> Anger, especially, could be harnessed to inspire the soldiers into action against an aggressor, to promote battle rage and secure victories. Anger aroused and unified troops. Tacitus used the term *ferocia* to positively describe the forcefulness of the soldiers' attacks on a number of occasions.<sup>20</sup> However, Tacitus also recorded the negative outcomes of the emotion of anger, which appear more common in his works than in those of Ammianus. Tacitus was often comprehensive in his reporting of these losses or near misses, for he did not hesitate to narrate, "The defeats sustained by Roman armies, the vicissitudes of warfare or the imperfect victories."<sup>21</sup> However, it is unlikely that the Roman army suffered more defeats in the first century as opposed to the fourth, rather it was Tacitus' literary preference to report those losses and close calls.

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<sup>16</sup> Mommsen (1886) 161–173 unfavourably and somewhat inaccurately described Tacitus as the most unmilitary of historians. Auerbach (1953) 52 stated that, "However fickle and superstitious the soldiers may be in Tacitus' description, he never hesitates to admit that they are human beings of a definite culture and with a definite sense of honor."

<sup>17</sup> Literally a hard flinty stone, esp. a whetstone, grindstone, hence fig. of any stimulus; *CLD* 155.

<sup>18</sup> The authors of the *Panegyrici* occasionally took this perspective, while no trace of it is in the *Historia Augusta*, Brandt (1999) 168.

<sup>19</sup> E.g. *Ann.* 1.20; 1.62; 1.68; 12.39; 15.4. A.M. 17.13.15; 24.2.5. Cf. Brandt (1999) 167.

<sup>20</sup> E.g. *Ann.* 2.25. Cf. Traub (1953) 253.

<sup>21</sup> Syme (1970) 135.

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When not engaged against an enemy the soldiers in Ammianus' account needed distractions to focus their energies upon. Bored and frustrated soldiers began to take out their pent up aggression on people and things around them. For example, at 27.10.7 Ammianus narrated in 368 that the Roman soldiers were eager for battle against the Alamanni, and in their impatience they, "ground their teeth in a threatening way, as if they had already come upon the savages" (*irritatio ad pugnandum, velut repertis barbaris minaciter infrendebat*. tr. J.C. Rolfe). Unfortunately for them, they could not find any enemies to attack, as they had all fled to the mountains. However, even without human beings to attack, the soldiers still managed to lay waste to all the fields and dwellings of the Alamanni that they came across.

The soldiers portrayed in the *Annals* and *Histories* also required similar distractions, and consequently threats from enemies were emphasised by commanders to direct their attention. For example, Tacitus wrote of the savage feeling (*furoris*) of the Roman soldiers who were driven to attack the enemy (*Ann.* 1.49). The importance of this only becomes clear when we realise that the desire to attack the Germans was seemingly the only alternative to engaging in internally destructive, mutinous behaviour, something that is emphasised throughout Tacitus' accounts of the Roman military.<sup>22</sup> In this and other episodes, "Officers and men both take up the familiar tools of civil strife, bribery, deceit, and violence to achieve their ends. Tacitus (*Ann.* 1.49.1) and the participants themselves (*Ann.* 1.19.3, 1.42.2) compare the revolts to civil strife."<sup>23</sup>

There are parallel patterns between mutinies and attempted mutinies that are common to both authors, but whereas Ammianus displayed certain sympathies towards the common soldiery,<sup>24</sup> Tacitus was particularly opposed to this type of behaviour from the rank and file, where his, "grim summary of the massacre indicates

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<sup>22</sup> For the behaviour of the Germans as a fighting force in this period, see Goldsworthy (1998) 42–53.

<sup>23</sup> Keitel (1984) 318 n.27.

<sup>24</sup> Ammianus appeared to support the soldiers' anger in the comments he made at 24.4.20, 26.9.3, and 27.10.5. Cf. Chapter 2.

his disapproval.”<sup>25</sup> At first, the soldiers behaved according to their training and discipline, however, when lack of supplies, poor leadership or miscommunication occurred, then this often led to mutinous dispositions.<sup>26</sup>

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The distressed emotional state of the soldiers in the first part of the first century led to the mutinies in Pannonia (*Ann.* 1.16–30).<sup>27</sup> The mutinies that Tacitus described in these accounts were of particular concern for him, as Tiberius’ son Drusus was involved in AD 14 after the death of Augustus was made known. As well as those on the Danube, Tacitus described the emotional state of the soldiers in Germany (*Ann.* 1.31–49), where the emperor’s adopted son and nephew Germanicus was in command, and in which the soldiers offered to support Germanicus if he should wish to supplant Tiberius (*Ann.* 1.31.1). The failure to behave with *honos* and *virtus* was a serious issue, and Tacitus blamed recent conscripts from the idle Roman *populus* who did not seek to emulate the glorious achievements of their ancestors, but instead behaved as deplorably as the Roman mob.<sup>28</sup>

The fact that Tacitus was adept at his method of historical enquiry is evident, but the need to portray the mutinies goes beyond mere rhetorical technique, they were, moreover, a critique of society and a way of showing the depravity that the Principate

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<sup>25</sup> Williams (1997) 61.

<sup>26</sup> This recurrent process has led to many comments by modern-day scholars. For example, in his examination of the style of Tacitus, Mellor (1993) 124 wrote, “The most extraordinary of the Tacitean tableaux is his account of the mutinies in Book 1 of the *Annals*.” This was in accordance with Goodyear (1972) 30, who in his commentary on Book 1 wrote, “The most notable example of vast elaboration in Tacitus is provided by his account of the mutinies of A.D. 14.”

<sup>27</sup> They demanded *modum miseriarum*, Brunt (1974) 95.

<sup>28</sup> Mellor (1993) 57. Also the *Histories* had done much to jaundice Tacitus’ opinion here, especially the Batavian revolt recorded at 4.12–36. For discussions of the mutinies, see Wilkes (1963) 268–271; Goodyear (1972) 194–314; Williams (1997) 46–61; O’Gorman (2000) 25–41; Malloch (2004); Woodman (2006).

had brought the state to. Tacitus used the terms *ira*, *ferocia* and *licentia* in connection with the mutinous soldiers. This however was not consistent with the use of anger words by Ammianus, who did not place the same emphasis on *ferocia* in his descriptions of Romans. When Ammianus used *rabies* and *ferocia*, it was frequently to describe barbarians, through emphasising their wild and savage natures (See Chapter 2). Tacitus used the term *ferocia* in a similar manner, but to describe the tumultuous nature of the Roman military of the first century. Thus he depicted the behaviour of the ferocious (*ferociam*) fifth and twenty-first legions, who were described as being angry (*irus*), even as their fellow soldiers were being punished (*Ann.* 1.45).<sup>29</sup>

After the death of Augustus the troops in Pannonia had taken the opportunity to ask for better pay and conditions of service. Tacitus portrayed the attitude of the Roman legions as hostile, and their simmering anger was unable to be reversed by their leaders. Here *ferocia* and *ira* were distinguished through the emphasis on hostility and aggression coupled with general rage. *Ferocia* suggests the long-term resentment the soldiers held as a consequence of their poor conditions. *Ira* was the immediate anger they subsequently expressed, regardless of any punishments that may be offered them. This mutiny was fuelled by bitter resentment, and it was purposely sparked in order to offer the soldiers the chance to seek their justified rewards. After executing the ringleaders, Drusus, with the onset of winter, was able to resolve the mutiny and return to Rome. The soldiers' anger had been for justifiable reasons, even though they had taken advantage of a change in government. Ultimately, the demands they made were not met and their anger petered out.

Sociologists point out that, "Cognitive appraisals of injustice lead to anger."<sup>30</sup> Thus when we look at the anger of the soldiers which was caused by their belief and encouragement that they were not receiving what they rightly deserved, they assessed this as unjust. They reacted just as the Roman mob would react, with violent uprisings. The soldiers were effective only when they

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<sup>29</sup> Cf. *Ann.* 3.40, *ii secretis colloquiis, ferocissimo quoque adsumpto aut quibus ob egestatem ac metum ex flagitiis maxima peccandi necessitudo, componunt Florus Belgas, Sacrovir propiores Gallos concire.*

<sup>30</sup> Goldberg, *et al.* (1999) 782.

remained united, and this homogeneity was harnessed by leaders in battle situations, but proved disastrous when it was directed towards their own.

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Certain differences between the representations of events and characters in Tacitus and Ammianus emerge through their descriptions of those men whom they considered to be most praiseworthy, such as Germanicus in the *Annals* and Julian in the *Res Gestae*. Germanicus was presented in the Stoic model, however, he did behave rather poorly and less decisively than Drusus in Pannonia, however, though Julian certainly held strong Stoic principles, he was certainly not portrayed that way by Ammianus. In regards to the revolt that Julian was subjected to in 361, many Tacitean references were unearthed by Williams which were not found in other sources that described the usurpation of Julian, and this suggests a definite leaning towards the earlier historian.<sup>31</sup> “Germanicus was comparable to Aeneas in controlling the *furor* of his soldiers.”<sup>32</sup> The emphasis in Ammianus, however, is not on the *furor* of the legions, but on the possibly deceptive control over their actions by Julian.”<sup>33</sup> As we have discussed previously, Julian’s anger led him to become more and more unpredictable in Persia, whereas in the case of Germanicus, he was the victim of the anger of his own men, as well as his own indecisiveness.

The similarities between the revolt of the Emperor Julian’s soldiers in Persia and the Pannonian revolt of the soldiers under Germanicus in Tacitus are quite remarkable, as are the differences, where, “Most importantly, in Assyria it is the general Julian, not his soldiers, who is driven by anger, whereas in Pannonia anger motivates the soldiers’ rebellion.”<sup>34</sup> Tacitus, unlike Ammianus, did not hesitate to use *rabies* to describe the anger of the Roman military, with its emphasis on raving and savagery. This is used, for instance, at *Ann.* 1.31, to describe the behaviour of the soldiers in

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<sup>31</sup> Williams (1997) 63, 66.

<sup>32</sup> Verg *Aen* 2.45.

<sup>33</sup> Williams (1997) 67.

<sup>34</sup> Williams (1997) 70. On the supposed praise accorded to Germanicus by Tacitus, see Goodyear (1972) 240.

Germany who, in order to improve their situation, allegedly wished to support Germanicus in an action against Tiberius. Here the army were said to have slipped into a ‘frenzy’, *in rabiem prolapsus est*. Tacitus applies the term negatively, so that the soldiers appeared overcome with a kind of hysteria, as if possessed (*Ann.* 1.32.3).<sup>35</sup> At first Germanicus gave in to their demands by paying them off and showing them a forged letter from Tiberius (*Ann.* 1.36–37).<sup>36</sup> However, further frustration was again apparent at *Ann.* 1.39, *fatalem increpans rabiem*. In order to preserve a semblance of control, as well as the lives of himself and his family, Germanicus was careful not to blame the soldiers for their actions, but instead explained it as caused by the anger of the gods, *neque militum sed deum ira resurgere*.

At *Ann.* 1.40 Germanicus was said to have wondered how he could keep his pregnant wife and young son safe amongst these madmen (*inter furentes*). The decision to send them away altered the entire mutiny, for, as a group, the troops then questioned the actions that forced the removal of little Gaius “Caligula” who had, according to Tacitus, been born in the camp, *infans in castris genitus*, as well as his beloved mother (*Ann.* 1.41.2).<sup>37</sup> The anger of the soldiers subsequently turned to shame, because the great grandchild of Augustus was being sent away to the Treviri and could not remain with them (*Ann.* 1.41.1, 3; 44.1). Because of this, the fury of the troops abated for a time. However, as Tacitus informs us, they then began to punish their own (*Ann.* 1.44; 48–49). The seriousness of this episode is called into question, for if the legionaries were so outraged by their conditions as to mutiny,

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<sup>35</sup> Cf. Woodman (2006) 320. Also Livy 28.34.4 (of another mutiny) *fatalem rabiem temporis eius accusat cum velut contagione quadam...castra quoque Romana insanierint* and Vell. Pat. 2.125.1 (of this same mutiny), *rabie quadam et profunda confundendi omnia cupiditate*.

<sup>36</sup> Cf. Dio 57.5.3.

<sup>37</sup> Suetonius *Calig.* 8.1–5 is in disagreement with this statement; he proved that Gaius was in fact born in Antium and that in the year of his birth his parents were in Rome and not on the German frontier. Suetonius (*Calig.* 9) also refrained from mentioning Agrippina as being part of the reason for the troops’ change of mind; he stated that it was the sight of little Gaius alone that subdued the rioting troops.

would the sight of a pregnant woman and a child have been enough to make them forget their miseries?<sup>38</sup>

Tacitus did not use terms randomly. His language was carefully chosen in order to create force and impact. *Furor* was a term applied to the Roman military on a number of occasions by Tacitus.<sup>39</sup> For example at *Ann.* 1.18, *eo furoris venere ut...*<sup>40</sup> Rather than a threat from an enemy, *furor* here was roused by feelings of outrage at unjust conditions. In this episode it becomes apparent that despite their unhappiness, it was not until one soldier, Percennius, pointed out the injustice of their situation at the hands of their own commanders, through punishments, harsh conditions, overwork and under-payment, that their indignation boiled over.<sup>41</sup> Such an assault upon the soldiers' sense of worth was intolerable.<sup>42</sup>

Livy was the first to apply the term *furor* to the mutinous behaviour of troops in Spain in 206 BC, in which Scipio Africanus was forced to take issue with his own legions. By using *furor*, Tacitus implied that this was the madness of 'civil war', which supported the usage of Livy,<sup>43</sup> whereas Ammianus' *furor* suggested barbarian frenzy.<sup>44</sup> The measure that Drusus took to quell the mutiny in Pannonia was to execute the ringleaders (*Ann.* 1.30.3), a decision that Tacitus approved. The response that Ammianus described in the *Res Gestae* to Julian's treatment of military personnel in Persia, who had disobeyed their commander's directives, was similar, for the emperor, indignant at their anger, had the soldiers either punished or executed — although Ammianus (24.3.2) used different anger terms (cf. Chapter 3).

There are other similarities between the descriptions of the Roman military in the accounts of Ammianus and Tacitus. They

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<sup>38</sup> Hurley (1989) 321.

<sup>39</sup> E.g. *Ann.* 1.18; 1.35; 1.40; 1.42; 1.49; *Hist.* 1.9; 1.63; 1.81; 2.46; 3.71; 4.27

<sup>40</sup> Cf. *Hist.* 1.81, 3.10, 4.27. Cf. Vell. Pat. 2.80.2, *in id furoris processerat*.

<sup>41</sup> Woodman (2006) 312 pointed out that Tacitus saw *furor* here as 'madness', a particularly common metaphor, especially in the political writings of Cicero.

<sup>42</sup> Cf. Fisher (2002) 181 on self-esteem and indignation.

<sup>43</sup> Woodman (2006) 312, 314.

<sup>44</sup> E.g. 16.12.46; 17.13.7; 18.2.14; 19.11.15; 31.13.10.

concern the collective behaviour of the Roman troops. When the soldiers were conditioned to think and react in a certain way, then their feelings were more easily controlled and focused. Rage against an enemy who refused to submit was an efficient and effective means of winning battles. For example at 25.3.10 when Julian was fatally wounded with a spear, the soldiers sought revenge against the Persians, spurred on by anger and grief (*sed reducto ad tentoria principe, incredibile dictu est, quo quantoque ardore, miles ad vindictam ira et dolore ferventior involabat, hastis ad scuta concrepans, etiam mori (si tulisset fors) obstinatus*). In *Ann.* 1.68, soldiers conditioned to exhibit battle rage as a collective force enabled the Roman military to slaughter the Germans. This reaction was common to both the *Res Gestae* and the *Annals*.

At times, Ammianus also described the soldiers' collective anger and aggression towards insult. These types of insult were often in direct confrontation to the groups' values and goals. For example, at 17.13.9 when the Limigantes were deliberately threatening Constantius (*cuius furoris amentiam exercitus ira ferre non potuit, eosque imperatori (ut dictum est) acriter imminentes*). The best illustration of this attitude in the works of Tacitus perhaps occurred at *Ann.* 2.13, where in AD 16 the troops' anger was caused by the insult they felt at the offer of the Germans to turn traitors and join with them. The Roman soldiers felt that they had been insulted and were furious (*iras*) at the suggestion (*Ann.* 2.13). After this attempt on their loyalty, the troops exhibited battle rage. Here, as in the example given from Ammianus, the anger term used is *ira*, suggesting masculine force directed outwards towards a common enemy in an attempt to correct these wrongs.

Outrage, which can be closely linked with insult, also permeated our authors' portrayals of the soldiers. In the *Res Gestae*, at 17.1.9 and 17.10.6, the cause of the soldiers' anger was fuelled by threats and obvious frustration felt as a result of the barbarian enemy (even though the enemy were not expected to make things easy for them), when trees had been deliberately felled in order to block their paths. This caught our historian's imagination. At *Ann.* 1.62, Tacitus wrote of the outrage felt by the Romans towards the Germans for their destruction of the legions of Varus. Six years after the devastating defeat the soldiers returned to bury the bones of their fallen comrades, but their distress at the task caused a rising fury against their enemy (*aucta in hostem ira*). Grief is strongly



emphasised in this episode, and this emotion led to anger and the desire to take revenge against the Germans for inflicting such a dishonourable slaughter upon the Romans, i.e., “the transformation from defeat to victory.”<sup>45</sup> Through the desire to attack the enemy, the Romans were re-establishing the *honos* that this defeat had cost them. Therefore, the *ira* of the soldiers was not related to madness or frenzy, but rather, as in the descriptions of Ammianus, it was a *virtus*. It was an honourable anger that they felt.

A sense of betrayal was also a cause for the soldiers to exhibit anger. One incident in Ammianus that involved betrayal was in 359, when the Roman soldiers became angry (*iras*) at the treachery of a deserter at Amida (19.5.8). Fear of treachery led to many instances (at least eighteen) of anger that Tacitus recorded. In one account (*Hist.* 1.81) Rome was placed in danger when a tribune named Varius Crispinus had been ordered to issue arms to the Seventeenth Cohort (*septimam decimam cohortem*) late at night in preparation to move northwards to the front, however, his motives were misconstrued and the troops accused the officers of beginning a rebellion. As a consequence, the soldiers reacted violently and angrily (*iras*). Therefore, as fear was replaced by anger, the soldiers attempted to counter the perceived treachery and assisted Otho, whom they believed was to be murdered.

The delicate balance of power between army and commanders was expressed in these incidents, and Otho himself felt fear (*timere*). Tacitus used *furor* here to describe the behaviour of the troops, associating it with their savagery and madness and the volatility of their behaviour, for it arose out of, “a trifling incident where no danger was anticipated,” to themselves (*Hist.* 1.80). As at other points (e.g. *Ann.* 1.29), Tacitus judged the behaviour of the soldiers to be immoderate and fuelled by passion rather than reason. They incited fear in Otho and his guests, an unacceptable state of affairs. Here Tacitus deliberately roused feelings of indignation in his audience at unjustified displays of anger, in a manner that was very much evident in Ammianus. Within the *Res Gestae* it was indignation towards corrupt officials or deceitful barbarians that the historian wished to arouse in his audience. Ammianus was far more supportive of anger in Roman troops than

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<sup>45</sup> Pagán (1999) 304.

Tacitus was, as the anger of Ammianus' soldiers was frequently raised on behalf of the state and not in opposition to it, its values or its goals. Ammianus was also a soldier, and so he knew much better how things were on the battlefield.

### TACITUS AND THE ANGER OF BARBARIANS AND OTHER ETHNIC GROUPS

Ann. 2.19 — ira	Ann. 12.40 — accendo
Ann. 2.66 — ira	Ann. 15.1 — accendo, dolor
Ann. 4.72 — ira	Hist. 4.29 — ira
Ann. 11.8 — accendo, ira	Hist. 4.60 — saevio
	Hist. 4.70 — furor
<b>Total number of anger words = 11 (9 episodes)</b>	

In Tacitus and Ammianus' portrayals of the anger of barbarians, it appears that at times that Ammianus took a more critical approach than Tacitus did to their emotions. For example, Ammianus suggested that he was very much aware of the mindset of the Alamanni (this is likely to be speculation) when at 16.12.34 he wrote that the Alamanni were afraid that if their captains stayed mounted upon their horses that they would too easily escape if their army was defeated. As a response an indignant shout was heard amongst their infantry (*indignationi mixtus auditus est*).<sup>46</sup>

Here Ammianus presented the barbarians' anger as justified due to their emotional distress, however he did not, of course, take sides with them in their frustration. Tacitus' attitude to barbarians on the other hand was much different. Tacitus was more inclined — although not entirely — to see those barbarians who were as yet completely, or at least partially, untouched by Roman culture and civilisation, such as the Britons, Gauls and Germans, as the 'noble savage'.<sup>47</sup> They were naturally 'moral', unlike the

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<sup>46</sup> Hummer (1998) 4, wrote that some believed that the Alamanni within Ammianus had a direct link to the Suebic Semnones of Tacitus. Hummer himself disagreed with this thesis.

<sup>47</sup> Traub (1953) 252.

decadent Romans.<sup>48</sup> Tacitus appealed to the pure barbarian nature, whereas Ammianus warned against the further integration of these uncultured barbarians into Roman society, and he did not believe in, “the myth of the good barbarian.”<sup>49</sup> Although once these groups were incorporated within the structures of Roman society, then they became suitably imprinted with positive Roman values. Furthermore, it was accepted by historians such as Tacitus that the barbarity of these groups would diminish when subjected to the right influences. *Virtus*, generally associated with the Roman military, was imputed to the barbarians when they were integrated within the army, and they supposedly acquired Roman *mores* and generally fitted into the Roman social structure. The belief was that *virtus* and *honos* would also transmit to their kinsmen who remained at home.

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Regardless of the time period, barbarians felt threatened by proximate Roman military activity. The histories of both Ammianus and Tacitus show that they were at least aware of some of the impacts that the expansion of the empire had on barbarian groups. At *Agr.* 30 Tacitus wrote that the British chieftain Calgacus remarked:

(The Romans are) the brigands of the world, they have exhausted the land by their indiscriminate plunder and now they ransack the sea. The wealth of an enemy excites their cupidity, his poverty their lust for power. East and west have failed to glut their maw. They are unique in being as violently tempted to attack the poor as the wealthy. Robbery, butchery,

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<sup>48</sup> It is the idea developed in Hellenistic ethnography, cf. Marcaccini (2000) 591–619, esp. 598 ff. Cf. Mellor (1993) 61.

<sup>49</sup> Camus (1967) 122. Although as we discussed in Chapter 2, once the barbarians were integrated into Roman society and took on positive Roman values, then Ammianus no longer had a moral problem with these groups.

rapine, the liars call Empire; they create a desolation and call it peace.<sup>50</sup>

That view is also supported in the accounts of Ammianus, who recorded the attitudes of the barbarians:

Their king (of the Isafilenses), whose name was Igmazen, a man of great reputation in that country, and celebrated also for his riches, advanced with boldness to meet (Theodosius), and addressed him thus, "To what country do you belong, and with what object have you come hither? Answer me." Theodosius, with firm mind and stern looks, replied, "I am a lieutenant of Valentinian, the master of the whole world, sent hither to destroy a murderous robber; and unless you at once surrender him, as the invincible emperor has commanded, you also, and the nation of which you are king, will be entirely destroyed." Igmazen, on receiving this answer, heaped a number of insulting epithets on our general, and then retired full of rage and indignation.<sup>51</sup>

(29.5.46)

In recording these instances, the historians showed remarkable impartiality, which may or may not have reflected their own individual beliefs.

Anger and indignation towards the Romans was prominent in those barbarians groups who were presented as being proud people, and they desired only to protect and hold onto their homelands. For example, in Ammianus it was the Isaurians who, although portrayed as robbers and looters, were also conscious of threats to their homeland. At 14.2.14 the historian indicated that these people were angered (*rabie saeviore*) by the presence of the Roman fortresses in Isauria, and thus began an unsuccessful uprising against the intruders. At *Ann.* 2.19 in AD 16, Tacitus

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<sup>50</sup> "No doubt the speeches of Civilis and Calgacus are the invention of Tacitus," Brunt (1974) 107. Supported by Clarke (2001) 105. Cf. Adler (2008) 173–195.

<sup>51</sup> "The *convicia multa* that the Moorish chief of the Isafilenses, Igmazen, who had been bluntly, arrogantly, insultingly, told to hand over the rebel Firmus, poured upon the Roman commander, Theodosius, was an angry reaction that may, in part, have been to maintain his status in the eyes of his entourage," Newbold (2002) 46.

noted the anger of the Germans at the insult made towards them by the Romans who had set up a mound with arms and the names of defeated German tribes, "That sight caused keener grief and rage among the Germans than their wounds, their mourning, and their losses" (*haut perinde Germanos vulnera, luctus, excidia quam ea species dolore et ira adfecit*). But it is not simply insult that leads to their outrage. Here, fear and grief were similarly strong emotions that led to and justified their anger. Being driven to extremes by their emotions, the Germans collectively united to attack the Romans in various engagements, in order to satisfy their hurt. Unfortunately for the Germans, this fuelled the Romans to further acts of military prowess, where, in the end, the forces of Germanicus defeated these Germanic groups.

In their behaviour, the reaction of the Germans to the behaviour of the Roman troops is in accordance with modern medical perceptions of anger, where it is documented that, "anger and hostility involve cognitive, affective, and behavioral components, the contribution of each of these components to the constructs of anger, hostility and violence."<sup>52</sup> Many soldiers face the traumatic effects of post-traumatic stress syndrome, and the German soldiers suffered just as those in the modern military do.

At *Ann.* 12.39 Tacitus described the reaction of the Silures who were enraged (*accendebat*) by the Roman commander who insulted them. Their outrage was caused by his utterance that they must be utterly exterminated or transported like the Sugambri.<sup>53</sup> The Roman commander however underestimated the force of his words, and the outraged Silures laid a trap for two auxiliary battalions. They then incited other tribes to join with them against the Romans. This was an event that was not uncommon and the barbarians were, as likely as anybody, liable to take offence. The arrogant Roman commander should have known this.

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<sup>52</sup> Beckham (2000) 452.

<sup>53</sup> "The Sugambri had been heavily defeated by Tiberius and the remnants of the tribe transferred to the west bank of the Rhine, to those parts of Gaul that made up the Roman territories of the *Germaniae*," Benario (1983) 187.

The Brigantian, Venutius, had been married to the British queen Cartimandua, but after their divorce hostilities arose, and at *Ann.* 12.40 Tacitus wrote, “This enraged the enemy, who were stung with shame at the prospect of falling under the dominion of a woman. The flower of their youth, picked out for war, invaded her kingdom” (*inde accensi hostes, stimulante ignominia, ne feminae imperio subderentur, valida et lecta armis inventus regnum eius invadunt*).<sup>54</sup> Tacitus related that the Brigantes’ fury (*accensi*) was caused by the insult caused by the reality of feminine rule, and naturally Venutius himself had a personal motive for attacking the queen. Earlier, these tribes had enjoyed Roman protection, but when the uprising occurred, which involved auxiliaries being sent to protect the queen, engagements took place that at first went badly for the Romans, but ended favourably. Both Ammianus and Tacitus discussed native revolts in this province, as well as the problems that distance and the breadth of water separating Britain from the continent presented to the Romans.

These episodes reveal that the barbarians were, naturally, just as able to cognitively assess hurts to themselves as the Romans were. They reacted through violent means, but that was simply because there was quite often no other means to express their indignation (just as with the Roman urban poor). At times this may have proved effective, but our historians quite frequently portray the opposite.

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Not every instance of the barbarians’ wrath was caused by active military threats. Tacitus emphasised this when he reported that in AD 28 the Frisians, who inhabited the coastal area between the Ems and the Rhine, revolted. As Tacitus related, the uprising was not caused by the desire for independence, but was due to the greed of Olennius, a first-rank centurion, who had been appointed to govern them and to exact tribute.<sup>55</sup> The whole incident began when Olennius questioned seriously the size of ox-hides provided as tribute for military purposes (*Ann.* 4.72). Later, the demands became even more oppressive as the Frisians were forced to give

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<sup>54</sup> For an examination of the Cartimandua episodes in the *Annals* and *Histories*, see Braund (1984) 1–6.

<sup>55</sup> Springer (1953) 109.

up to the Romans first their lands, and then their women and children in order to meet the excessive duties imposed on them. Their distress led them to make complaints, but when they received no reply, their response was recorded as follows, "Then came angry remonstrances, and when they received no relief, they sought a remedy in war" (*hinc ira et questus et postquam non subveniebatur remedium ex bello*). The professed rights of the Frisians were completely ignored, and their outrage at a perceived injustice, forcibly transmitted here as *ira*, and the fact that Olennius refused to ease his onerous demands, meant that the Frisians found they had no recourse but to go to war against the Romans. This therefore relates to anger determinants from the Introduction, "(2) a sense of betrayal, when there is an acute awareness of disappointment," and, "(3) a response to righteous indignation." Of this episode, one can rightly point out that, "Here, near the end of Book 4, (Tacitus) is principally concerned to point a moral: the Romans fail generally to live up to traditional ideals and at times seem almost to behave like barbarians."<sup>56</sup>

In Ammianus, the barbarian reaction to outrage and injustice was strongly exhibited at 29.6.6–12. This occurred when the report of the murder of their king Gabinius roused the Quadi and the tribes round them to madness (*effervit*). The Quadi accused Aequitius, the commander of the cavalry in Illyricum, of having brought about the destruction of their king. The consequences of both these episodes were the desire to retaliate aggressively towards those who had caused the outrage, therefore correcting a wrongdoing.

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The claimed ability to know the innermost feelings and thoughts of individuals was common in ancient historiography, and emerged, for example, in Tacitus' reportage of generals' speeches in *oratio obliqua*.<sup>57</sup> It is certain that Tacitus relied at times on his own imagination, and, "The rhetorical technique of *inventio*, which is

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<sup>56</sup> Martin (1989) 256.

<sup>57</sup> On Tacitus' use of dramatic speech, see Miller (1964) 279–296; (1975) 45–57. On battle exhortations, see Hansen (1993) and (1998); Pritchett (1994).

fleshing out an unadorned historical fact with plausible and entertaining material, was a pervasive feature of ancient historiography.<sup>58</sup> *Inventio* may have enhanced the following representation:

Rage against the place, which indeed had also revolted from his father, rather than considerations of policy, made him embarrass himself with the siege of a strong city, which the defence of a river flowing by it, with fortifications and supplies, had thoroughly secured.<sup>59</sup>

(*Ann.* 11.8)

What Tacitus revealed was that Vardanes, brother of the Parthian king Gotarzes II, had put his brother to flight in AD 47–48, after he was alleged (incredibly) to have travelled 375 miles in two days. Once there, Vardanes besieged the fortified city of Seleucia, which had refused his rule. This then led to the above account, where Tacitus presented the resultant anger (*ira*) of the prince. This action did not go to plan, for Gotarzes was able to raise a force against his upstart brother. However, Vardanes did eventually gain control of Parthia, but with the accumulation of this power and wealth he became insufferable and, as a consequence, his own subjects angrily assassinated him (*Ann.* 11.10.3). “He returned covered with glory, and therefore the more haughty and more intolerable to his subjects than ever” (*regreditur ingens gloria atque eo ferocior et subiectis intolerantior*).

Traub suggested that Tacitus saw *ferocia* in a barbarian as an admirable trait, as it showed their, “defiant and dauntless nature,” not simply the fury of the savage.<sup>60</sup> Tacitus’ use of *ferocia* here, however, was definitely presented in a negative sense, which went against Traub’s thesis. By describing Vardanes as arrogant, wild and unbridled, he described the negative aspects that the civilised

<sup>58</sup> Ash (1999) 115.

<sup>59</sup> *In quos ut patris vi quoque defectores ira magis quam ex usu praesenti accensus, implicatur obsidione urbis validae et munimentis obiecti amnis muroque et commeatibus firmatae*. English translation by Church (1942). I find that Church’s translation of this passage conveys the emotion of anger rather better than Matthews’, who translates *ira* as ‘irritation’.

<sup>60</sup> See introduction.



Romans frowned upon when viewing the barbarians,<sup>61</sup> and as such it was only natural that they should earn him a sudden death by the hands of his own countrymen. The notion of overconfidence and arrogance also came through in Tacitus' reference to Mithridates, the Armenian prince (*Ann.* 11.9.2). "And then everything passed into the hands of Mithridates, who showed more cruelty than was wise in a new ruler" (*et cuncta in Mithridaten fluxere, atrociorum quam novo regno conducere*).<sup>62</sup>

Once Vardanes was assassinated, Gotarzes II was elevated, however he was just as severe as his brother, for he was described by Tacitus as being cruel and secretive (*Ann.* 11.10.4).<sup>63</sup> Further on, Tacitus discussed the resentment and indignation of the Parthians due to the Roman installation of their former hostage Tigranes V to the throne of Armenia:

This was too much for the Parthian grandees. 'Are we so utterly despised', they said, 'that we are invaded not even by a Roman commander but by an impudent hostage who has long been considered a slave?' The king of Adiabene, Monobazus, further inflamed their resentment. 'Where,' he asked, 'from what quarter, can I find protection? Armenia is gone! The borderlands are following! If Parthia will not help, we must give in to Rome, and make the best of it — avoid conquest by surrendering.'<sup>64</sup>

(*Ann.* 15.1)

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<sup>61</sup> Tacitus described the Parthians as barbarians, and the Armenians fall under this loose category, see Veyne (1993) 359.

<sup>62</sup> Tacitus applied the negative term *atrox* on a number of other occasions. E.g. Agrippina was also described as *atrox*, 12.22.1 & 13.13.3; as *ferocia* at 13.2.2 & 13.21.2, Keitel (1978) 464. In the application of *ferocia* to Agrippina, Goodyear (1972) 106 n.1 wrote that, "it is mistaken to find only a pejorative tone: the word fixes and describes a conspicuous trait of character, without passing judgement on it."

<sup>63</sup> Cf. Keitel (1978) 462–473 for a discussion of Parthia and Armenia in *Annals* 11 & 12 and the episodes just discussed.

<sup>64</sup> *Eo contemptiois descensum, ut ne duce quidem Romano incursarentur, sed temeritate obsidis tot per annos inter mancipia habiti. Accendebat dolorem eorum Monobazus, quem penes Adiabenum regimen, quod praesidium aut unde peteret*

This episode serves to highlight Tacitus' understanding of client kings. Tigranes V was a hostage whose many years at Rome had reduced him, *ad servilem patientiam* (*Ann.* 14.26.1). When he finally proved useful to the Romans, he was sent off to Armenia. He was briefly welcomed, but then abhorred as a, *regem alienigenam*.<sup>65</sup> He was therefore overthrown by Tiridates, the brother of Vologaeses I (*Ann.* 15.1.1–2).<sup>66</sup> The resentment recorded here was similar to Ammianus' Quadi at 29.6.6, angered by the Romans when they learnt that their king had been killed. This unbridled, un-Roman behaviour distinguished the eastern Armenians and Parthians from Tacitus' northern, seemingly more moral barbarians. The uniting factor in these incidents was their destructive rage, which was less pernicious than the Roman military and the unsophisticated frenzy of the barbarians, but was rather the unpredictable manifestations of their deceitful natures.

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At *Agr* 11.5, the *ferocia* of the barbarians retained its sense of wildness, but here it fits in more with Traub's assessment, as it was given a more positive spin, though only in contrast to other, less than praiseworthy behaviours of the Gauls. Tacitus wrote that the Britons retained a ferocious spirit (*ferociae*) because they had not been emasculated by long years of peace, whereas the Gauls were indolent due to the peace they now had. Tacitus stereotypically portrayed the Britons and other barbarians as waging war with a native ferocity, a ferocity in some ways commendable from an outsider's perspective. *Ferox* and *ferocia* were linked with a savage temperament, and whether it was shown positively or not, these anger terms indicated a dangerous adversary, full of wrath and savage wildness.

Finally, all these groups described above could be offended by Roman intervention, as every one of these peoples, whether "savages" or easterners, were nonetheless human. Naturally they became enraged by what they, quite understandably, saw as offensive and humiliating behaviour.

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*rogitans: iam de Armenia concessum, proxima trahi; et nisi defendant Parthi, levius servitium apud Romanos deditis quam captis esse.*

<sup>65</sup> Like Meherdates at *Ann.* 12.14.3.

<sup>66</sup> Cf. Gowing (1990) 322.

### TACITUS AND THE ANGER OF EMPERORS

Tiberius	Ann. 1.12 — ira
Tiberius	Ann. 1.13 — irascor
Tiberius	Ann. 1.69 — accendo
Tiberius	Ann. 1.74 — exardesco
Tiberius	Ann. 3.22 — ira
Tiberius	Ann. 3.69 — ira
Tiberius	Ann. 4.21 — ira
Claudius	Ann. 12.20 — dolor
Nero	Ann. 14.49 — ira
Nero	Ann. 16.6 — iracundia
Otho	Hist. 1.21 — ira
<b>TOTAL NUMBER OF ANGER WORDS = 11 (11 EPISODES)</b>	

Both Tacitus and Ammianus, as students of human nature and close observers of autocracy, sought to learn the motivations of the emperors and exposed how their anger could impact on many and varied lives. To a considerable extent, it was up to the individual emperor whether or not he chose to control his anger. This decision, conscious or not, would impact upon many in close proximity to him, from his family, to his courtiers, the senate, others in privileged positions, groups further afield such as barbarians beyond the frontiers, and even the descendents of individuals who no longer presented a threat.<sup>67</sup>

Since the power of rulers extends much further than that of their subjects, there is more scope for perceiving rebuffs to their radius of will. This radius of will is the perceived degree to which one's power extends to, and, for a ruler, this naturally extends much further than for anyone else.<sup>68</sup> In Ammianus this insult came through strongly at 30.6.3, when Valentinian burst into a mighty fit

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<sup>67</sup> Cf. Harris (2001) 249; Sen. *De ira* 1.2.2. In *Clem* 1.5.6 we are told that a king should not show inexorable anger (*non decet regem saeva nec inexorabilis ira*).

<sup>68</sup> For 'radius of will', see Fisher (2002) Chapter 9.

of rage when the envoys of the Quadi were trying to excuse the actions of their countrymen. In Tacitus, insult at offences was also apparent, for example at *Ann.* 1.12, in AD 14, where Tacitus recorded Tiberius' anger with Asinius Gallus at his unfortunate comment, as well as lingering resentment at past offences. Tiberius could be said to feel lasting hurt at frequent transgressions to his notions of justice and his perceived territorial boundaries. Psychologists today report that when, "someone commits a wrong and victimises us (or others with whom we identify), we commonly experience feelings of injustice and want actions to be taken to restore justice. Often such actions include the imposition of punishment and calls for revenge."<sup>69</sup> This was certainly what Tiberius felt; the difference between the emperors and ordinary people was that they were in a position to be able to enact that revenge more frequently.

In Chapter 3 we saw how often the emperors in the fourth century demonstrated their anger. In Tacitus too the anger of emperors (who were more frequently seen by the public and thus under closer scrutiny) was a frequent and recurring theme. There are further implications for the presentation of the emperors in these works. At first glance, it may appear that Tacitus focused a lot of attention on the anger of emperors, however, much of it was either alleged or inferred, and in total there are only eleven episodes, as compared to fifty-five in Ammianus. Like Ammianus, Tacitus used *ira* to describe the anger of the emperors on a number of occasions (6 in Tacitus and 12 in Ammianus). Less frequently, other terms such as *indignatio* are utilised to demonstrate the anger of the emperors, but these were far less remarkable than the range and frequency of Ammianus' portrayals.<sup>70</sup>

Another important element is that both historians often provided obituaries of deceased characters that necessarily discussed their morals and temperament.<sup>71</sup> There the nature of their characters was dissected and divided into exemplary and deplorable elements. The recurrence of negative impressions inevitably, and as always, revealed as much about the nature of the historians and

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<sup>69</sup> Wenzel (2009) 1.

<sup>70</sup> See Chapter 3.

<sup>71</sup> Mellor (1993) 54. On the obituaries of Tacitus, see Martin (1981) 218; Camus (1967) 73.

their own values, as the characters they portrayed. At *Ann.* 11.26, in the words of Gaius Silius, Tacitus wrote of Claudius that, “He is slow to discover deception — but quick to anger.” At *Ann.* 3.69, he wrote of Tiberius, “And capable, as he was, of mercy (when not impelled by anger)...” These types of generalisations enhanced the image of the irascible emperor, controlled not by reason, but by emotion.

Following closely in this tradition, Ammianus was also not averse to using innuendo to emphasise the suspicious natures of his anger-prone emperors. At 21.16.9, in a generalisation, he described the reaction of Constantius to possible treason, as the emperor fell prey to bitter and angry suspicions (*acerbitas eius et iracundia suspicionesque*). At 14.7.4 Ammianus made a similar generalisation when he described the equally suspicious nature of Gallus and his reaction to treason and his ability to be easily aroused (*accenderat*) by various accusations. It was perhaps inevitable that the anger of emperors and Caesars was often driven by fear of treachery and a sense of insecurity. It was lonely at the top and the emperors were prone to listening to flatterers, and even became so accustomed to them that they began to believe in the terrifying webs of lies and deceptions. Great power co-existed with great fear.<sup>72</sup>

### Tiberius

The generalising of the anger of emperors was seen most obviously in the history of Ammianus in his descriptions of the emperor Valentinian, whom the historian constantly portrayed as hot-tempered in a particularly disapproving sense.<sup>73</sup> For Ammianus, Valentinian was irascible and unsympathetic. The Tacitean Tiberius, on the other hand, had sympathetic qualities, and on top of that, he dealt with his anger differently. For Tiberius, although fuelled by resentment, was still able to control his anger. At *Ann.*

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<sup>72</sup> For the emphasis on fear, see MacMullen (1988) 84–96.

<sup>73</sup> E.g. 27.7.4, *hanc enim ulcus esse animi diuturnum interdumque perpetuum prudentes definiunt, nasci ex mentis mollitia consuetum, id adserentes argumento probabili, quod iracundiores sunt incolumibus languidi, et feminae maribus, et iuuenibus senes, et felicibus aerumnosi.*

3.69, we are presented with 'Tiberius' anger and control of it in a typical Tacitean 'aside':<sup>74</sup>

And capable, as he was, of mercy (when not impelled by anger), he proposed that, since Gyaros was a grim, uninhabited island, Silanus — as a concession to his Junian family and former membership of the senate — should be allowed to retire to Cythnos instead.<sup>75</sup>

(*Ann.* 3.69)

Tacitus' accounts of the Roman emperors contained all the emotive elements one would expect in a historian of his times. The phrase *ira non impelleretur* suggested more than was implicitly stated. Such innuendo supported the historian's desired perceptions and as with Ammianus his rhetorical language was constructed to arouse an emotional response in his audience. The lack of specific instances in Tacitus showed that much of the anger he recorded was non-specific or implied, and this was in stark contrast to the numerous instances recorded by Ammianus. Even in his descriptions of Tiberius' reaction to Germanicus, it was more implied, and it was assumed that the emperor was seething with rage, rather than being explicitly stated. Emperors in both centuries came under scrutiny from some of the harshest critics who were writing from their elitist viewpoints, and there Ammianus' descriptions followed Tacitus'. The emperors who frequently targeted the privileges of the upper orders would, naturally, come

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<sup>74</sup> Cf. Bradley (1990) 511.

<sup>75</sup> *Atque ille prudens moderandi, si propria ira non impelleretur, addidit insulam Gyarum immitem et sine cultu hominum esse: darent Iuniae familiae et viro quondam ordinis eiusdem ut Cythnum potius concederet.* Cf. 22.2 *irae et clementiae signa*. "(Tiberius) now displays the very quality (*prudens*) which Dolabella had urged him to adopt (1 *provideri*), while *moderandi* indicates a return to his famous *moderatio* after its conspicuous absence during the trial itself (67.2 *non temperante Tiberio*). Since *moderari* commonly means also 'to steer', and since *impellere* (though used differently of anger elsewhere: Ter. *Hec.* 484–5, Sall. *C.* 51.4, Sil. 9.382) is commonly used of being buffeted by storms and the like, the combination of the two verbs here may perhaps suggests that T. is alluding to the metaphor of storms and anger," Woodman (1996) 470.

under attack more often than those who left, to a large degree, the senatorial and curial classes alone.

The emperor Tiberius was arguably prone to suppressed anger and resentment, which could erupt into manifest anger. The feeling of deep and bitter anger and ill-will that seethed inside the emperor was supposed by Tacitus (amongst other reasons) to have been so troublesome that the emperor removed himself from public life for long stretches.<sup>76</sup> For example, Tacitus wrote that Sejanus, “knew how Tiberius’ mind worked. Inside it, for the eventual future, he sowed hatreds. They would lie low, but one day bear fruit abundantly” (*Ann.* 1.69.5). However, the suppression of rage was not necessarily a negative characteristic and often avoided any unnecessary setbacks.<sup>77</sup> Nevertheless, even though he had his shortcomings, Tiberius was by no means an ineffective ruler.<sup>78</sup>

Since the death of Augustus, the emperors, particularly those of the Julio-Claudian line, were becoming more and more removed from reality. The decadence of their reigns was emphasised by the historians to promote a pessimism far removed from Augustan idealism. The extensive and pervasive influence of the emperors on all levels of society only served to symbolise the reality of the dangers an absolute ruler presented to the populace of the Roman Empire, even those of the old aristocracy:

All the same he failed to appease the indignation he had caused. Tiberius had hated him for years, feeling that Gallus’ marriage to his own former wife, Marcus Agrippa’s daughter

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<sup>76</sup> For Tiberius as a resentful emperor, see Maranon (1956). For criticism concerning Tacitus’ harsh treatment of Tiberius, see Jerome (1912) 265–292, who presented him as simply a rhetorician concerned only with literary effect. See also his translator, Ritter (1924) 30, who called Tacitus a, “malicious slanderer.” For the presentation of Tacitus as an, “honest historian,” see Marsh (1926) 289–310.

<sup>77</sup> See for example, Plaut. *Pers.* 296–7; Livy 9.38.13–14; Quint 9.2.54; cf. Morgan (1994) 239.

<sup>78</sup> For an examination into Tacitus’ presentation and portrayal of the emperor Tiberius, see e.g. Syme (1967) *passim*; Daitz (1960) 30–52; Woodman (1989) 197–205.

Vipsania, was a sign that Gallus had the arrogance of his father Gaius Asinius Pollio (I) — and was over-ambitious.<sup>79</sup>

(*Ann.* 1.12)

As this passage reveals, Tacitus had a flair for the dramatic, where he reveals his aims as an author. Goodyear, in fact, stated that he understood 'Tacitus', "desire, indeed determination to interest and move and enthral his audience...(which)...disposes him to select for full elaboration such material as is most susceptible of dramatic and moving treatment." Then he went on to point out the sombre purpose behind this, "By eliciting from the events he narrates general lessons about human motivation and psychology, Tacitus elevates his history onto a philosophical plane, thus in one way fulfilling his aim to be instructive." Through this method, Tacitus was able to carefully bring out, on many occasions, cause and effect, rather than only the facts.<sup>80</sup>

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The following reveals that signs of trouble were evident early on, but it also reveals the level of control Tiberius had over his anger. Furthermore, it demonstrates the anger Tiberius felt currently as well as his long standing (inferred) resentment.

The senate, meanwhile, was descending to the most abject supplications, when Tiberius casually observed that, unequal as he felt himself to the whole weight of government, he would still undertake the charge of any one department that might be assigned to him. Asinius Gallus then said: — "I ask you, Caesar, what department you wish to be assigned you." This unforeseen inquiry threw him off his balance. He was silent for a few moments; then recovered himself, and answered that it would not at all become his diffidence to select or shun any part of a burden from which he would prefer to be wholly

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<sup>79</sup> *Nec ideo iram eius lenivit, pridem invisus, tamquam ducta in matrimonium Vipsania M. Agrippae filia, quae quondam Tiberii uxor filerat, plus quam civilia agitare Pollionisque Asinii patris ferociam retineret.* Cf. 1.2.1 & Goodyear (1972) 105. In this passage, "*ferociam* is pejorative in that it represents Tiberius' view of Asinius, but, in that it is part of T.'s comment of Tiberius' attitude, lacks this tone," Goodyear (1972) 106 n.1.

<sup>80</sup> Goodyear (1972) 26, 42, 24.



excused. Gallus, who had conjectured that he had given offence (*etenim vultu offensionem coniectaverat*), resumed: — “The question had been put to him, not with the hope that he would divide the inseparable, but to gain from his own lips an admission that the body politic was a single organism needing to be governed by a single intelligence.” He added a panegyric on Augustus, and urged Tiberius to remember his own victories and the brilliant work which he had done year after year in the garb of peace. He failed, however, to soothe the imperial anger (*iram*): he had been a hated man ever since his marriage to Vipsania (daughter of Marcus Agrippa, and once the wife of Tiberius), which had given the impression that he had ambitions denied to a subject and retained the temerity of his father Asinius Pollio.<sup>81</sup>

(*Ann.* 1.12)

Gallus had offended Tiberius when the emperor took his hypocritical remark seriously. Tiberius’ words suggested that he was willing to take on part of the administration only if he was asked to do so. The exchange with Asinius Gallus seems an indication that there existed some confusion not wholly cleared up.<sup>82</sup> Further on, Gallus attempted to correct his mistake by praising Tiberius, but his offence was so deep that he failed to appease the emperor’s anger. Tiberius’ embarrassment at being put on the spot and the actions of Gallus in the past would have affected this thoroughly sensitive man, and his annoyance clearly alarmed Gallus. Tiberius did attempt to control his anger, but Tacitus implied his resentment at this and other offences, which eventually destroyed Gallus. The elderly ex-consul was ultimately condemned and imprisoned, and died in AD 33.<sup>83</sup>

It does appear that Tacitus reported more instances of resentment, especially in regards to Tiberius, than Ammianus, whose characters were more prone to outbursts of anger. For example, at *Ann.* 3.22, Tiberius showed resentment and

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<sup>81</sup> Translation by J. Jackson, with corrections by R. Newbold and B. Sidwell.

<sup>82</sup> Cf. Kampff (1963) 37.

<sup>83</sup> See Traub (1953) 250.

compassion at the trial of Aemilia Lepida, wife of Quirinus. It is unclear exactly why Tiberius was resentful, but most likely it was due to Lepida allegedly consulting astrologers about the imperial house.

At *Ann.* 3.69 Tacitus reported that Tiberius was capable of showing mercy when not influenced by resentment (*ira*) towards Silanus. Silanus was accused of extortion in Africa, as well as offences against the divinity of Augustus and the imperial majesty of Tiberius. A number of reasons, therefore, for Tiberius to feel a steadily increasing amount of long-held resentment.

With Ammianus' characters, when they felt seething anger it usually either erupted, was replaced by other emotions or was quelled. This occurred, for example, when Julian was in Persia and was roused to deep indignation (*ad indignationem plenam gravitatis erectus*) when he perceived that the smallness of the sum promised to the troops excited a mutinous uproar (*cum eos parvitate promissi percitus tumultuare sensisset*, 24.3.3). The emperor's anger mounted, but was sensibly restrained as he sought a more logical alternative than simply striking out. He managed instead to quieten their rage through making an encouraging speech. In 354, Constantius felt growing anger at the conduct of Gallus in Antioch and his increasing popularity with the army, but his resentment was not allowed to linger. He struck a fateful blow to the Caesar before any immediate damage to the crown was dealt (14.11). Ammianus' characters could and did feel resentment, but it was the immediate manifestations that our historian was most concerned with. In Ammianus, however, no emperor displayed the same level of ongoing and repressed anger that Tacitus brought forth in his portrayal of Tiberius.

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Another episode that involved Tiberius' angry suspicions was with Agrippina the Elder. Sejanus was said to have, "inflamed and exacerbated," all of this (*accendebat haec onerabatque Seianus*). The wife of Germanicus was present with the army at the end of the Rhine mutiny in AD 15, when she herself encouraged the soldiers, thus preventing a bridge across the Rhine from being destroyed, wherein the, "uprising was checked by a woman" (*compressam a muliere seditionem*). This insult came on top of earlier happenings in the mutiny. The emperor believed that Agrippina was purposely

currying favour with the army by using her beloved son Gaius to appeal to them (*tamquam parum ambitiose filium ducis gregali habitu circumferat Caesaremaque Caligulam appellari velit*, *Ann.* 1.69). Tacitus supposed that within Tiberius' resentful mind he believed that, "Agrippina now had more power with the armies than the officers or commanders" (*potiorem iam apud exercitus Agrippinam quam legatos, quam duces*), and that, "she had suppressed a mutiny which the imperial name had failed to check." Certainly this was paranoia on Tiberius' behalf.

Naturally, this was a distortion. Though Agrippina had made her presence felt and noted, she alone could not have suppressed an entire uprising.<sup>84</sup> Tiberius was open to suspicions, especially against those who were of imperial stock and even those who fought for their ruler. Germanicus fitted that bill, but his wife, a direct descendent of Augustus, was also a potential hazard. Tiberius was concerned with threats to his imperial station and there is a close parallel here with Constantius' reaction to the popularity of Gallus. In Ammianus' portrayal, Constantius was similarly susceptible to flattery and the whisperings of his advisors. As a consequence of these coercions he understood the need to remove the Caesar permanently.<sup>85</sup>

Ultimately, Tacitus presented Germanicus favourably in order to contrast him with Tiberius, in line with the traditional hostility felt towards the emperor.<sup>86</sup> In the end, Tiberius did not successfully eliminate Germanicus, instead Germanicus died in AD 19 in Antioch under mysterious and controversial circumstances. According to the sources, Germanicus had asked his friends to avenge his death, his understanding being that he was being murdered. However, it is unlikely that the cause was Tiberius (Tac

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<sup>84</sup> Cf. Hurley (1989) 324.

<sup>85</sup> See Chapter 3. For a brief discussion of Constantius' motives towards Gallus on his last journey, see Mooney (1958) 175–177. For Constantius' need to rid himself of the Caesar, as well as an overview of his career, see Thompson (1943) 302–315. For his dismissal and execution, see *A.M.* 14.11.19–23, 15.1.2. Cf. *PLRE*, 'Fl. Claudius Constantius Gallus 4', 1.224.

<sup>86</sup> Veneration of Germanicus was seen especially in Suet. *Gaius* 1–6. Cf. Goodyear (1972) 239.

*Ann.* 2.71; cf. Suet. *Calig* 1.2; 3.3). Nevertheless, Tiberius was perhaps justified to be wary of the increasing popularity of Germanicus, for after the death of his nephew, Agrippina returned to Rome with his ashes and the public display of grief was immense (*Tac Ann.* 2.73–5; 2.82–84; cf. Suet. *Calig* 1.2; 2; 5; 6). Tiberius was even forced to issue orders that the people be restrained in their grief (*Tac Ann.* 3.6).<sup>87</sup>

Finally, Constantius and Tiberius both felt threatened by the increasing popularity of their subordinates, as they endangered the compass of their individual wills. At *Ann.* 1.52 Tacitus informed his readers that Tiberius was pleased that Germanicus had suppressed the soldiers' mutiny in Germany, but was worried that his achievements had come through rewarding them with money and early retirement. In the *Res Gestae*, Julian's popularity led to him twice being hailed as Augustus by his own troops.<sup>88</sup> Previous to this his half-brother, Gallus, had proved far too popular with his troops in the East,<sup>89</sup> and consequently he had to be permanently suppressed by Constantius. At 2.26.2–3 Germanicus became so successful in his enterprises in Germany that Tiberius sent him a letter, recalling him to Rome. Similarly Constantius, who was becoming increasingly frustrated by the unconstitutional actions of Gallus and the increase of his potentially dangerous power, recalled the Caesar. Germanicus was popular and very likely a threat to Tiberius, however, it is unlikely that in the fourth century either Julian or Gallus would have cut such popular figures.

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A final example of the anger of Tiberius came at the trial of Granius Marcellus, the governor of Bithynia, for *maiestas* in AD 15 (*Ann.* 1.74), when, in a state of fury, the emperor declared that he would vote openly and under oath (*ad quod excarsit adeo, ut rupta taciturnitate proclamaret se quoque in ea causa laturum sententiam palam et iuratum, quo ceteris eadem necessitas fieret*). In this case Granius Marcellus had been charged by Caepio Crispinus of having defamed Tiberius. Another accuser, Romanus Hispo, had alleged that Marcellus had placed a statue of himself higher than that of

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<sup>87</sup> Cf. Ferrill (1991) 53.

<sup>88</sup> See Chapter 3.

<sup>89</sup> E.g. 14.7.9, 14.11.13.

the Caesars and had also replaced the head of a statue of Augustus with that of Tiberius. The reason why Tiberius got so angry in this episode is a matter for debate. Some scholars believe that Tiberius was furious because of the frivolity of the charges brought against Marcellus and, as a result, the emperor decided to vote for an acquittal.<sup>90</sup> Others have claimed that Tiberius' anger was caused by the transgressions committed by the defendant and planned to vote for his conviction.<sup>91</sup> Some even believe that how Tiberius intended to vote cannot be resolved, or that he was probably angered chiefly by the charge of Crispinus.<sup>92</sup> In any case, such uncertainty about the causes of Tiberius' anger suited Tacitus' purpose, i.e. to emphasise the difficulty of understanding and dealing with Tiberius.

Nevertheless, *ad quod exarsit*, suggests that Tiberius did not lose his temper because of the whole trial, but at a certain point. This is probably when it was revealed that the head of the statue of Augustus had been removed.<sup>93</sup> Tiberius held a respectful attitude towards Augustus' memory and resented any disrespect shown towards it, even in the treatment of the statue. What is likely is that Marcellus was not defaming the memory of Augustus intentionally, but was seeking to flatter the current emperor by placing his head in the place of Augustus. What he had not counted on was Tiberius' deep dislike of flattery. We can suppose then that it was both or either the insult done to Augustus' memory and Tiberius' resentment of flatterers that led to his anger.<sup>94</sup> After Cn. Piso asked Tiberius when he would vote, either first or last, so that he could try to vote in line with him, Tiberius was said to have repented his outburst and allowed Marcellus to be acquitted of treason. Tiberius showed undying respect for the deceased emperor, but was able to curb his anger when he understood that charges of disrespect were being laid to benefit the accuser, such as the two episodes in *Ann.* 1.73. In cases of real impertinence against Augustus, Tiberius acted

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<sup>90</sup> Marsh (1931) 110; Charlesworth (1934) 628; Rogers (1935) 10; Miller (1959) *ad loc.*

<sup>91</sup> Shotter (1966) 208.

<sup>92</sup> Fritz (1957) 90; Walker (1968) 91.

<sup>93</sup> Shotter (1966) 207–208.

<sup>94</sup> Cf. Katzoff (1971) 682–683.

abruptly and at times with anger, such as in the case against Appuleia Varilla (*Ann.* 2.50.2).

The link between anger and disrespect has been the focus of much theoretical discussion and empirical investigation, and the determination is that, “disrespectful treatment is a common determinant of both anger and aggression.”<sup>95</sup> Tiberius certainly felt that an act of disrespect had been committed and responded angrily. Anger empowered the emperor to react against an injustice, but when he learnt of its consequences, was able to restrain his outrage and thus correct his behaviour.

The stresses placed upon the reluctant emperor were none too small, and thus it is apparent that being placed in a public profile perhaps accounted in some ways for his withdrawal into self-imposed exile in Rhodes, where he was no longer forced to be present in front of the bickering senate or the emotionally charged *populus* of Rome. The veracity of Tiberius’ emotional state was not always easily hidden, given his public profile, even though he did become reclusive. This characteristic came across especially strongly in the writings of the historians Tacitus and Cassius Dio; however Philo praised Tiberius for his alleged lack of anger (*Legatio ad Gaïum* 303).

The ‘retirement’ of Tiberius to Rhodes provided for Tacitus further scope for his attacks, for example at *Ann.* 1.4 he stated, “his thoughts had been solely occupied with resentment (*iram*), deception, and secret sensuality” (*Ann.* 1.4.4). By emphasising this behaviour of the emperor, Tacitus not only gave vent to his perceptions of the erroneous ways of the *princeps*, but was also, “little more than a subtle and almost persuasive caricature of that Emperor; it is, in fact, a travesty of the truth.”<sup>96</sup>

The powerful rhetoric of Ammianus was similarly used to effectively destroy the reputation of the Caesar Gallus, especially when he claimed that Gallus roamed the streets at night with armed attendants asking those they met what they thought of the Caesar (14.1.9). This story, however, may be a myth, for Tacitus told a comparable story of the emperor Nero (*Ann.* 13.25). The use of sweeping statements, as well as the occasional aside, was an effective means of emphasising the negative characteristics of

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<sup>95</sup> Miller (2001) 533.

<sup>96</sup> Thompson (1969) 125.

emperors and Caesars, without having to rely upon specific instances.<sup>97</sup> Ammianus used these rhetorical devices even further to condemn Constantius, Valens and Valentinian during the treason trials in Antioch and Rome (see Chapter 3).

It is a possibility that Tiberius did not want to become *princeps*, but accepted the position in order to avoid anarchy and civil war. However, Tacitus did imply that Tiberius wanted *imperium*, but deliberately disguised his eagerness.<sup>98</sup> For a long time he controlled his anger in public and behaved in a restrained manner, but in his later years he retired to Capri in bitterness at the constant frustrations. There he attacked his enemies, both real and imaginary, and this was especially so after he was allegedly betrayed by Sejanus, his most trusted confidant (or conversely, Tiberius may have been the betrayer, but it is not something he would admit to).<sup>99</sup> Tiberius had numerous reasons to be resentful, which probably led to his general irritability and impatience. In sum, Tiberius was quite different from Ammianus' emperors.

**TACITUS AND THE ANGER OF MAGNATES,  
INCLUDING EQUESTRIANS**

Ann. 2.10 — ira	Ann. 6.26 — ira
Ann. 2.55 — ira	Ann. 11.28 — fremo
Ann. 2.57 — accendo	Ann. 12.8 — dolor
Ann. 2.70 — ira	Ann. 16.22 — ira
Ann. 4.3 — commoveo, ira	Hist. 2.100 — iracundia
Ann. 4.60 — accendo	Hist. 4.11 — iracundia
Ann. 5.4 — ira	Hist. 4.49 — ira
	Hist. 4.77 — ira
Total number of anger words = 16 (15 episodes)	

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<sup>97</sup> Cf. Dunkle (1971) 17.

<sup>98</sup> For a discussion of Tiberius' acceptance of the title of 'Augustus', whether willingly or not, see for example, Scott (1932) 43–50.

<sup>99</sup> Or both could have been the victims, for a discussion involving the various sides of this argument, see Boddington (1963) 1–16.

Found in the works of both authors is the anger of magnates, a fairly common feature, especially in the historical works of Tacitus, who was much closer to the ruling aristocracy than was Ammianus (e.g. *Ann.* 2.55; 16.22). Although we have a number of instances in which female aristocrats show anger, these are excised from the discussion here. This is done deliberately in order to bring it more in line with Ammianus' portrayal of anger in magnates, where he refrained from including direct manifestations of the rage of women. Also included in this discussion are men of the equestrian order, such as Sejanus, who became a Praetorian Prefect and was unquestionably a very powerful man. Though not strictly magnates, they were still often treated as, and behaved like, the elites. Therefore their obvious wrath is incorporated here.

Use of the usual set criteria for analysis produces fourteen episodes of the anger of magnates. The anger of the upper orders was reported more during times of political uncertainty, and anger was often a reaction to fear-inducing circumstances, which was used to cover up any weakness. Anger could also be used to create fear in others in order to assert control. For the elites, anger could be roused by the emperors, through the behaviour of the citizens under their control, or through the untoward conduct of fellow *honestiores*.

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Like Tacitus, Ammianus was deeply concerned with the power that corrupt courtiers allegedly wielded over their emperors, and both historians were in general hostile towards flatterers. For example, at 14.5.4, Ammianus wrote of the extraordinary powers that sycophants had over their ruler, when they could exaggerate Constantius' suspicions by suggesting that his authority was threatened. For Tacitus, these flatterers were men such as Sejanus, Macro and Tigellinus, three Praetorian Prefects who influenced the ruler for the worse.<sup>100</sup> At *Ann.* 4.3, Tacitus reported that Sejanus sought to destroy Drusus, the son of Tiberius, "He chose, on the whole, the stealthier way and to begin with Drusus, against whom he had the stimulus of a recent resentment" (*Placuit tamen occultior via et a Druso incipere, in quem recenti ira ferebatur*).

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<sup>100</sup> Cf. Mellor (1993) 60.



Sejanus was a character deeply despised by Tacitus for his scheming against others, as well as for having the ear of Tiberius. He fed the emperor with rumours and allegations that were surely meant to benefit only himself. Sejanus was portrayed by Tacitus as a figure fuelled by anger and vengefulness (cf. *Ann.* 4.3.2).<sup>101</sup> These traits were especially apparent when it seemed as though his carefully laid plans were failing dismally (e.g. *Ann.* 5.4).<sup>102</sup> By revealing this aspect of Sejanus' character, Tacitus prepared his audience for his reaction towards the insult of Drusus. By striking Sejanus, who took it as an outrage at being treated this way, he took his revenge through the seduction of Drusus' wife. To Tacitus, who took his knives out against this character, Sejanus' response was underhanded and full of spite, which is perhaps understandable as this was revenge after all. To him and others, these were the ministrations of an untrustworthy figure, and there were many such reasons for disliking Sejanus.

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Thrasea Paetus was presented equivocally in the writings of Tacitus. He was not part of the sycophantic elite who ratified every decision of the emperor(s). However, Tacitus did largely disapprove of Thrasea's ostentatious opposition, for Thrasea stood apart and spoke his own mind. For example, Thrasea walked out of the Senate when the death of Agrippina was made known, for he did not wish it to seem that he condoned the murder. According to Tacitus, his refusal to take part in the flattery meant that he, "endangered himself without bringing general freedom any nearer" (*Ann.* 14.12). This outspokenness supposedly led to Nero, along with his prosecutors, to ruin the senator. Nevertheless, although Tacitus did not support the means, he did regret the loss of freedoms, for, according to the historian, Thrasea's stance made him equivalent to 'dignitas' and 'libertas'. 'Libertas', as in freedom of speech, was something that Tacitus, as an orator, treasured and

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<sup>101</sup> Harris (2001) 249 n. 95

<sup>102</sup> Tacitus claimed that Sejanus' ascendancy was the result of heaven's anger against Rome (*Ann.* 4.1), and as Mellor (1993) 54 pointed out, this portrait certainly owed a lot to Sallust's description of the unpleasant Catiline.

admired. Nero took this away in his oppressive regime.<sup>103</sup> The fear that the elite suffered under the principate steadily increased and only a very few chose to speak out or even disobey direct commands. Others, who were far more sycophantic, would play on this non-conformist attitude and use it to their own advantage. At *Ann.* 16.22, Tacitus reported one such example of the attacks upon Thrasea, this time in AD 66 from a fellow senator, Cossutianus Capito, a “notorious *delator*,”<sup>104</sup> whose anger (*ira*) was increased by Nero in order to make harsh accusations against Thrasea in an obvious effort to cast further aspersions upon the man.

The fourth century presented even more difficulties for the upper classes for, as the emperors were removed to the new capital of Constantinople, they were distanced from the old aristocracy at Rome, along with its internal conflicts. In Ammianus’ time, the urban prefects ruled Rome under the directives of the emperor, and the senate, as a body, was barely influential. The passage above reveals that the senate, in the first century, was still very much a potent force, and even the emperors played power games in order to attack and undermine senators and ex-consuls who, due to their status, were meant to be exempt from such outrages. That Nero was astute enough, and had been taught so by his personal advisers, to play such games, shows that there was still that grip on reality he had not quite lost — at least until this year (although of course he might still have been under the influence of advisors). For by inciting the anger (*ira*) of Cossutianus (whom Thrasea had participated in the prosecution of for extortion in AD 56, *Ann.* 16.21.3) and encouraging others to speak up against Thrasea, he was able to eliminate an outspoken opponent.

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That some magnates could on occasion vent their frustrations towards entire populations revealed the extent of the power and influence which they held. The ex-consul Piso was able to give full play to his anger towards the Athenians. His anger (*ira*) was caused by the Athenians when they had refused to release a man named Theophilus, whom they had condemned to death for forgery

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<sup>103</sup> Syme (1970) 136. For an examination of Nero as presented by Tacitus, see Rubiés (1994) 29–47.

<sup>104</sup> Ginsburg (1986) 534.

(*Ann.* 2.55).<sup>105</sup> Here, Tacitus recounted the aggression of Piso, who attacked not only the Athenians for all their past disasters and called them, “the dregs of the earth” (*conluviem illam nationum*), but included a tirade against Germanicus, who was apparently acting “un-Roman” by making excessive compliments towards the Athenians. That Piso was such an influential figure made him feel even more outrage when he could not assist his friend Theophilus, and this was perhaps more a matter of prestige and status than his wish to aid a friend. The negativity surrounding Germanicus was exacerbated by his indignation towards the Athenians, and after this incensed speech Piso hurried off across the Aegean in pursuit of Tiberius’ adopted son.<sup>106</sup>

Piso had grudgingly accepted Tiberius as emperor, but looked down on his son Drusus, and also saw it as his duty to also repress Germanicus’ ambitions (*Ann.* 2.43). Any aid that Germanicus offered Piso was only reluctantly accepted, for his resentment was such that he sought to undermine Germanicus at every opportunity (such as at *Ann.* 2.57). Not even the adopted son of an emperor was safe from the scheming of certain magnates, and even Tiberius was jealous of Germanicus’ successes and popularity with the army. Tacitus’ use of *ira* here carries with it the weight of the ex-consul’s lingering resentment. It appears that in descriptions concerning specific instances of the anger of magnates, *ira* was the term used when there was a severe and often fatal repercussion for others, as the subsequent death of Germanicus revealed.

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Anger was a powerful force for reducing a population to a trembling standstill, and though using aggression may have had harsh consequences later for the magnate, at the time it was a quick measure for delivering satisfaction for whatever outrage he felt had been committed. For many, anger was a means of control, for it covered up the fear that the magnates themselves must have felt. At *Hist.* 2.100, Tacitus recounted that an admiral of the Ravenna

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<sup>105</sup> According to Goodyear (1981) 361, “The disclosure that Piso had a personal motive probably emanates from that source, often detectable, which knew no good of him and no evil of Germanicus.”

<sup>106</sup> Cf. Microw (1943) 146.

and Misenum fleets was indignant (*iracundiam*) because he had not been made praetorian prefect immediately. This use of *iracundia* conveyed the anger of disappointed hope (*Hist.* 2.100).<sup>107</sup> *Iracundia* was expressed in the sense of seething rage that was not as immediate as *ira*, yet just as devastating for those who eventually encountered it. Tacitus did not hesitate to communicate to his audience what implications this dangerous emotion could lead to. This is expressed in the above passage, for Bassus had previously betrayed Galba, and without hesitation he set about to ruin Vitellius for the perhaps trifling concern of not being immediately promoted. This fits with anger determinant 2 from the Introduction, “a sense of betrayal, when there is an acute awareness of disappointment.”

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The anger of the magnates discussed in this section all focus on one thing, which is the personal preservation of themselves and their status, or in the case of Thræsea, the preservation of a traditional sense of government. The endless struggles for power led to bitter conflicts, and this at times affected the innocent and not so innocent people around them. The emperors were often the tools of the magnates’ manipulations and, on more than one occasion, any means to advance themselves was quickly exploited.

### TACITUS AND THE ANGER OF THE POPULACE

Ann. 5.9 — ira	Hist. 3.74 — fremo
Hist. 1.33 — indignatio	Hist. 3.80 — rabies
Hist. 1.40 — ira	
<b>TOTAL NUMBER OF ANGER WORDS = 5 (4 EPISODES)</b>	

In each century, as one would expect, the Roman population rioted when supplies were not provided or when they particularly opposed a certain decree or decision by higher authorities. For example, in AD 29 the angry populace rose up in support of Agrippina and her son and delayed their deaths (*Ann.* 5.2). In 32

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<sup>107</sup> Of this passage, Chilver (1979) 261 wrote, “The earlier career of Sex. Lucilius Bassus and the circumstances in which he betrayed Galba are unknown: presumably his *praefectura alae* was held on the Rhine.”

the excessive price of grain led to riots as the people voiced their grievances to the emperor in the theatre, leading to a resolution by the Senate against the populace (*Ann.* 6.13). Tacitus portrayed the populace of Rome as often unruly and disrespectful, such as they were in Ammianus. However, even though some scholars may believe that, “although Tacitus describes the pathology of the mob, he does not enquire into its causes,”<sup>108</sup> this seems unlikely and, as we shall see, the causes of mob anger were to a certain extent recounted by Tacitus, although he did not, in general, approve of their behaviour.

Tacitus was further removed from the plebeians than even Ammianus was. Ammianus’ perspective enabled him to obtain and portray a more objective viewpoint of the oppression by the upper classes, rarely seen in Tacitus’ accounts.<sup>109</sup> Nevertheless, both historians held a typically elite “snobbish view” of the commons when they had occasion to riot, leading Tacitus at one stage to write of, “the sordid plebs who hang about the Circus and theatres” (*Hist.* 1.4). Tacitus held the traditional belief that social class equalled moral status, and for that reason used terms for the common people that included, *plebs sordida*; *vulgus imperitum*; *inops vulgus* (*Hist.* 1.4; 3.31; *Ann.* 2.77).<sup>110</sup> As a variation on this, “Tacitus can see both virtue and vice within the individual characters in his histories, but he invariably passes harsh judgments on people acting in groups.”<sup>111</sup> This necessarily included the soldiers as well as the plebs.

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We have only five anger episodes that concern the Roman populace (*Ann.* 5.9; *Hist.* 1.33; 1.40; 3.74; 3.80). At *Ann.* 5.9, the *populus*’ rage against Sejanus was appeased by his death and the executions of his supporters. At *Hist.* 1.33 the indignant crowd was calling for Otho’s head as the instigator of a plot against Galba, however, on the same day they, or at least sections of them, would

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<sup>108</sup> Dudley (1968) 172.

<sup>109</sup> Thompson (1969) 127.

<sup>110</sup> For an examination into Tacitus’ use of the term *vulgus*, see Newbold (1976) 85–92.

<sup>111</sup> Mellor (1993) 56.

be cheering for the former and desiring the death of the latter. Here then, their allegiances were fickle and their anger was moot. However, we cannot be certain that the same individuals were involved in these mobs. At *Hist.* 1.40 the historian informs us that as the soldiers became mutinous in Rome and Galba was being swamped by the multitude, the crowd showed either, "great fear or great anger." As the soldiers moved in, the excited populace was forced to leave and Galba was killed, such was the ineffectiveness of the populace's anger against armed military personnel. At *Hist.* 3.74 the angry crowd demanded the death of Sabinus and so effective were their cries that Vitellius had the man executed.<sup>112</sup> Finally, at *Hist.* 3.80, Tacitus recorded the rage of the Roman populace towards Arulenus Rusticus and the ambassadors in their desire to protect Vitellius. They failed to kill Arulenus.

The crowd's behaviour was similar to the way in which crowds riot today, where sociologists have examined the effects of collective violence and the temporary and informal nature of the mob, and where the collective violence rarely lasts more than a day.<sup>113</sup> The mob sought to punish offenders as well as to rectify a perceived wrong in all these instances. Whether successful or not, this does show that human beings can assemble for a common purpose driven by anger, and on occasion could be successful in achieving their outcomes.

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The following passage demonstrated to 'Tacitus' audience how influential the anger of the populace could at times be:

By this time, Galba was being carried hither and thither by the irregular impact of the surging multitude. Everywhere the public buildings and temples were crowded with a sea of faces, as of spectators assembled to watch a pageant. Yet not a cry came from the mass of people or the lower classes. Their faces betrayed astonishment; their ears were strained to catch every sound. There was neither disorder nor quiet, but only the hush typical of great fear or great anger. Otho, however, was

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<sup>112</sup> For an examination into the behaviour of the urban plebs under Vitellius, see Newbold (1972) 308–319.

<sup>113</sup> Senechal de la Roche (1996) 104.

informed that the mob was being armed. He ordered his men to move in at full speed and seize the danger points. Thus it was that Roman troops made ready to murder an old, defenceless man who was their emperor, just as if they were set on deposing a Vologaeses or Pacorus from the ancestral throne of the Arsacids. Forcing their way through the crowd, trampling the senate under foot, with weapons at the ready and horses spurred to a gallop, they burst upon the Forum. Such men were not deterred by the sight of the Capitol, the sanctity of the temples that looked down upon them, nor the thought of emperors past and emperors to come. They were bent upon the commission of a crime that is inevitably avenged by the victim's successor.<sup>114</sup>

(*Hist.* 1.40)

The death of Galba came after the description given above. The term *ira* was used for the anger of the populace, which is more ambiguous here, for Tacitus stated that their silence came either from, "great anger or great fear" (*magni metus et magnae irae silentium est*). The consequence of the *populus'* anger was not the death of Galba, for Otho's men forced the civilians to evacuate the Forum, leaving Galba defenceless when the Praetorian Guard joined with Otho against him. Also, that the populace knew what was to eventuate is certainly implied, for they had gathered as if to watch a pageant, and it was even rumoured that they were being armed. Their anger could certainly be a response to the encouragement of leaders to defend their emperor against the onslaught of Otho and his soldiers, and naturally fear would also attend such a pursuit when faced with an army of well trained and battle hardened

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<sup>114</sup> *Agebat huc illuc Galba vario turbae fluctuantis impulsu, completis undique basilicis ac templis, lugubri prospectu. Neque populi aut plebis ulla vox, sed attoniti vultus et conversae ad omnia aures; non tumultus, non quies, quale magni metus et magnae irae silentium est. Othoni tamen armari plebem nuntiabatur; ire praecipitis et occupare pericula iubet. Igitur milites Romani, quasi Vologaesum aut Pacorum avito Arsacidarum solio depulsuri ac non imperatorem suum inermem et senem trucidare pergerent, disiecta plebe, proculcato senatu, truces armis, rapidi equis forum inrumpunt. Nec illos Capitolii aspectus et imminantium templorum religio et priores et futuri principes terruere quo minus facerent scelus cuius ultor est quisquis successit.* Cf. Chilver (1979) 99.

troops. The mob fled the Forum and those that did not leave willingly were cut down by Otho's men. Here the united anger of the populace against expert swordsmanship was no match, and the collective nature of the populace was only effective when it was against those who were either unarmed or unwilling to risk using force against them. The collective will of the mob could at times be easily curbed.

A marked difference between the accounts of the angry populace in Tacitus and Ammianus is the violent impact the populace had on events in times of civil war. For example, at *Hist.* 3.80, Tacitus wrote:

This success made the people more enthusiastic than ever. The city mob armed. Only a few had proper shields; the majority caught up whatever weapons they could find and insisted upon the order to advance. Expressing his thanks, Vitellius told them to throw a screen out in front of the city. Then the senate was summoned and a delegation chosen to meet the Flavian armies and urge a peace settlement, ostensibly in the interests of the country. The envoys had a mixed reception. Those who had approached Petilius Cerialis faced an extremely hazardous situation, for the troops flatly refused terms. The praetor Arulenus Rusticus was wounded. What made this particularly scandalous was his high personal reputation, quite apart from the violation of his status as an ambassador and praetor. His fellow negotiators were roughly handled, and his senior lictor was killed when he ventured to clear a way through the press. Indeed, if they had not been protected by an escort provided by the commander, in the mad passion of civil strife the diplomatic immunity enjoyed by ambassadors even among foreign nations would have been infringed with fatal consequences outside the very walls of Rome.<sup>115</sup>

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<sup>115</sup> *Eo successu studia populi aucta; vulgus urbanum arma cepit. Paucis scuta militaria, plures raptis quod cuique obvium telis signum pugnae exposcunt. Agit grates Vitellius et ad tuendam urbem prorumpere iubet. Mox vocato senatu deliguntur legati ad exercitus ut praetexto rei publicae concordiam pacemque suaderent. Varia legatorum sors fuit. Qui Petilio Ceriali occurrerant extremum discrimen adiere, aspernante milite condiciones pacis. Vulneratur praetor Arulennus Rusticus; auxcit invidiam super violatum legati praetorisque nomen propria dignatio viri. Pulsantur*



Here the term used to describe the rage of the populace (*vulgus*) was *rabies*, a word that connoted violent action with a strong indication of passion-driven frenzy. The mob's enthusiasm was quickly quelled, for the Flavians were victorious in their march on Rome and Vitellius was killed. Further on though, the fickleness of the Roman mob was emphasised at *Hist.* 3.85, where Tacitus stated that as Vitellius lay dead on the Gemonian Steps, "the mob (*vulgus*) reviled him in death as viciously as they had flattered him while he lived."<sup>116</sup>

The ineffectiveness of the *populus* as a fighting force was very much apparent, even though unarmed civilians had little chance against armed troops. The *populus'* anger directed towards Arulenus Rusticus and the ambassadors was all too brief and soon replaced with antipathy against the losing side, even if previously they had been devout supporters. Although there was not this kind of civil strife in Ammianus' time, as it was the armies that determined the rise of usurpers, rather than any input from the civilians, there were still incidents that involved supporting sides. For example at 27.3.13, when Ammianus reported that Christians in Rome were aroused to anger when supporters of both Ursinus and Damasus, candidates for the bishopric of Rome, were murdered.<sup>117</sup>

Ammianus at times believed that the anger of the plebeians was justified, but this does not reveal itself in the works of Tacitus. Both authors saw the commons as a mass, but to Tacitus their anger was always foolhardy, whereas to Ammianus there were occasions when the only means for the *populus* to express itself and its needs was through violent rage, however, his attitudes do range from sympathetic to unsympathetic. One episode in Ammianus where his sympathies for the anger of the *populus* comes through most strongly was at 27.3.10, where he reported that the city prefect Lampadius was taking building materials from the poor in Rome without payment and then had to save himself from the fury

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*comites, occiditur proximus lictor, dimovere turbam ausus: et ni dato a duce praesidio defensi forent, sacrum etiam inter exteris gentis legatorum ius ante ipsa patriae moenia civilis rabies usque in exitium temerasset.* For this episode see Wellesley (1972) 182.

<sup>116</sup> Wellesley (1972) 188.

<sup>117</sup> Cf. Clark (2004) 103.

of the enraged poor through flight. Undoubtedly the populace had a right to be angry, and their collective will helped them to unanimously overcome a hostile individual.

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Ammianus understood and revealed the extent to which groups were affected by anger, even when he did not support the transmittal of their grievances. When anger is discussed by the historian we inevitably have a cause given and, to some extent, the manifestations and consequences of their anger. Tacitus, perhaps more so than Ammianus, feared and hated *licentia* in the troops and the plebeians. Nevertheless, he did on occasion explain the causes of anger, notably amongst the troops in the AD 14 mutinies.

## CONCLUSION

Ammianus was a conscious continuator of Tacitus, but dealt with a changed autocracy, elite and empire. It is quite noticeable that Ammianus revisited a number of Tacitean elements, including *adlocutiones*, brevity, and at times an aristocratic separation from other classes. Both historians were naturally aware of the great divide between the wealthy and impoverished classes and they shared an interest in the psychology behind individuals' motives for action.<sup>118</sup> Another similarity between the authors is that they both had heroes. Ammianus' heroes were in the form of the general Ursicinus and the Emperor Julian. This was similar to Tacitus, who created a favourable impression of Germanicus as a supreme commander and intelligent officer, in order to contrast him with Tiberius, although it is true that he was also critical of Germanicus at times. Both Julian and Germanicus showed anger, however, again, these portrayals differed. The anger of Germanicus was rare, but it suited his purpose, for example at *Ann.* 1.41, "He, with a grief and anger that were yet fresh, thus began to address the throng around him" (*isque ut erat recens dolore et ira apud circumfusus ita coepit*).<sup>119</sup> Julian's anger was righteous in Gaul and was justified against the mutineers, but as he progressed east it became more and more erratic and irrepressible. For example, in 363, when Julian raged against the people of Antioch when the senate pointed out

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<sup>118</sup> Martin (1981) 215.

<sup>119</sup> Also, *Ann.* 2.70.

that he could not lower the price of commodities at that time (22.14.2–3).

Another issue to be raised is that Ammianus was writing in a manner that harked back to his predecessors such as Tacitus, in which certain emperors were denigrated in order to make other figures appear more righteous in contrast. Thus at 31.14.5, Ammianus used a generalisation to describe the anger of the emperor Valens, which was merely the last of many generalisations that he made about this particular individual.<sup>120</sup> In this instance he wrote of Valens that, “his rage could be satisfied only by blood and the spoliation of the rich.” From this very non-specific statement, Ammianus brought forth a construction of what a villainous emperor was perceived to be. Therefore, by accentuating the negative qualities, he attempted to block out any positives that Valens’ reign brought, such as his religious policies, which were far more impartial than those of Julian. Even Valentinian was said to have remained neutral in religious differences (30.9.5). However Valentinian did reinforce orthodoxy over Christians and persecuted those of the Nicene faith.<sup>121</sup>

Tacitus too did not hesitate to incorporate generalisations, hypothetical and negative examples to enhance his anger portraits. For example at *Ann.* 3.69, he wrote of Tiberius, “And capable, as he was, of mercy (when not impelled by anger)...” These witty asides helped to enhance a rhetorical presentation and were incorporated so subtly and neatly that rarely would the audience question their authenticity, for they were functional in their context. This was a very useful historiographical method of denigrating the personality and behaviour of individuals, especially emperors.

As pointed out in Chapter 2, *pathos* was used by Ammianus to bring forth an appropriate response in his audience, a device long used by Tacitus.<sup>122</sup> Even some of the more subtle constructs of Tacitus’ writing style were drawn upon by Ammianus. Each author incorporated similar literary techniques, such as invented speech, insinuation and the drawing on of their predecessors for words

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<sup>120</sup> Cf. Ov. *Met.* 1.200; Lucr. *De rerum natura*, 5.1327.

<sup>121</sup> Cf. Downey (1969) 62f.

<sup>122</sup> Martin (1981) 217.

or phrases, to influence their readers.<sup>123</sup> Nevertheless, this was standard in ancient historiography, and it is not unique to either Ammianus or Tacitus.

For both historians, the personal comments on the anger episodes were few, and this followed a deliberate style of not cluttering up their work with excess information. By doing this, the authors also avoided showing bias and maintained (or so it seems) their objectivity. Tacitus made references to emotion to enhance and underpin certain episodes in a deliberate measure to ratify the cause, manifestation or consequence of an anger episode, but also because it was worth recording for history. Ammianus naturally followed this historiographic convention.

Anger was significant to both historians. In the works of both authors this emotion served to avenge a suffered disgrace or betrayal. For example in AD 69, Tacitus revealed the Roman army's resentment against Julius Burdo for his betrayal of Capito (*Hist.* 1.58). Ammianus was also aware that the Roman army felt bitterness towards traitors. In 359 Ammianus recorded that the Roman soldiers were angry at the treachery of the deserter at Amida (19.5.8). The Roman military were imbued with the virtues of *honos* and *virtus*, *gloria* and *fides*, and thus were outraged when their sense of justice and their radius of will was violated. In 357 even the German infantry were angry with their leaders whom they believed would flee if anything adverse should occur. Thus their anger was a result of the fear of abandonment and betrayal (16.12.34).

Tacitus regarded anger as more frequently caused by divine intervention into the historical process (*Hist.* 2.38.2; 4.54.2; 4.84.2; *Ann.* 1.39; 4.1; 13.17; 14.22), while Ammianus understood *ira* almost exclusively as a driving force of human nature. According to Brandt, Ammianus' gods do not become angry. However, Brandt must here be refuted, for Ammianus' gods *do* become angry. See for example 31.2.1: *Martius furor*, 31.13.1: *lituosque Bellona luctuosis inflaret in clades Romanas solito immanius furens*.<sup>124</sup> Tacitus followed the viewpoint of Seneca (*De ira* 1.1.5), who saw anger as linked to lethal frenzy and irrationality and was thus to be abhorred. Ammianus, on the other hand, saw anger more from an Aristotelian viewpoint

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<sup>123</sup> Cf. Martin (1981) 224f.

<sup>124</sup> Brandt (1999) 172.

and frequently it was justified, especially when it was expressed on behalf of an important other, such as an emperor, a commanding officer, a close companion or even a social group.

What also comes across in the presentation of individuals in the works of both authors is the concept of the “radius of the will.” Especially in regards to the emperors, their perception of the extent of their power was imprecise and often vague and led them to easily become upset once a transgression of that will was made, because for them, their, “will seems to be able to command anything at all.”<sup>125</sup> When that failed, or something did not go to plan, then anger could easily be roused. Examples of this are given above in our discussion of the anger of emperors.

Not every similarity between Ammianus and Tacitus is proof of imitation. Both were writing in the historiographic tradition, so naturally resemblances occurred.<sup>126</sup> Ammianus read widely and other historians and writers had an impact on his literary style. Emotions such as anger were used to create effect and enhance the historians’ intention to create an emotional reaction in their audience. This fed into their characterisations.

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<sup>125</sup> Fisher (2002) 159.

<sup>126</sup> For the resemblances between Ammianus and Tacitus in their dramatic portrayals, see Barnes (1998) ch. 15. For Ammianus’ historiography, see Blockley (1975).

## CONCLUSIONS

“Plutarch,” said he, “once gave orders that one of his slaves, a worthless and insolent fellow, but one whose ears had been filled with the teachings and arguments of philosophy, should be stripped of his tunic for some offence or other and flogged. They had begun to beat him, and the slave kept protesting that he did not deserve the flogging; that he was guilty of no wrong, no crime. Finally, while the lashing still went on, he began to shout, no longer uttering complaints or shrieks and groans, but serious reproaches. Plutarch's conduct, he said, was unworthy of a philosopher; to be angry was shameful: his master had often descanted on the evil of anger and had even written an excellent treatise *Περὶ Ἀργησίας*; it was in no way consistent with all that was written in that book that its author should fall into a fit of violent rage and punish his slave with many stripes. Then Plutarch calmly and mildly made answer: ‘What makes you think, scoundrel, that I am now angry with you. Is it from my expression, my voice, my colour, or even my words, that you believe me to be in the grasp of anger? In my opinion my eyes are not fierce, my expression is not disturbed, I am neither shouting madly nor foaming at the mouth nor getting red in the face; I am saying nothing to cause me shame or regret; I am not trembling at all from anger or making violent gestures. For all these actions, if you did but know it, are the usual signs of angry passions.’ And with these words, turning to the man who was plying the lash, he said: ‘In the meantime, while this fellow and I are arguing, do you keep at it.’ “

(Aulus Gellius, *NA* 1.26.1–9, tr. J.C. Rolfe)

This study has emerged from collecting and calculating from a lexicon key words denoting anger in the *Res Gestae* of Ammianus Marcellinus, as well as, but to a lesser extent, the *Annals* and *Histories* of Tacitus. Making the study keyword based has reduced the need to make (possibly erroneous) inferences about whether an incident is actually related to anger. Instances that related to the individuals and groups who are the basis for this study were grouped and discussed, including emperors, the Roman military,<sup>1</sup> barbarians and Persians, the general *populus*, as well as the officials and magnates who helped govern the empire. The final chapter compared these representations of anger in the *Res Gestae* with those of Tacitus, Ammianus' forerunner, in the *Annals* and *Histories*. The purpose of this study has been to understand and interpret the role of a particular emotion in the work of Ammianus. This undertaking has, I hope, generated useful and reliable data and led to valid inferences about his values and attitudes.

Ammianus presented his subject matter through the filter of his own partisanship,<sup>2</sup> and from Ammianus' representations of characters and events we get a notion of the historian's own comprehension of these times, as well as a sense that some of his own anger and indignation were reflected in his portrayals. As a rhetorician,<sup>3</sup> he delved into people's lives and personalities and claimed to know what their state of mind was. As a moralist,<sup>4</sup> he judged words and deeds. Naturally, emotions were present in all the events he described, although it was not always easy to find

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<sup>1</sup> For accounts from historians whose focus is on the military and whose works on Ammianus are important, but are not directly relevant to this book, see for example Crump (1975). Crump began the study of the military aspect of Ammianus' work, which prior to this had been neglected. His most valuable contribution to the study of the Late Roman Empire is his seventh chapter (114–127), which detailed the northern frontiers and Julian and Valentinian's progress within them. Also Austin (1979).

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Cameron (1999) 355.

<sup>3</sup> See Blockley (1994) 62, "Ammianus is one of the most rhetorical of the ancient historians. His purpose in his writing is primarily that of a rhetorician."

<sup>4</sup> For Ammianus as a moral historian, see Brandt (1999).

out what the ‘true’ emotional reactions were.<sup>5</sup> In the *Res Gestae*, Ammianus described a society which, like any society, was permeated by levels and manifestations of anger. The ramifications of this passion affected all groups within the *History*. Some of the instances of anger that Ammianus described appear warranted and have a necessary impetus. For instance, a display of anger could be used to intimidate an enemy, both on and off the battlefield, as well as to overcome one’s own fear. However, as I have observed again and again, a display of anger could be inappropriate and its driving impulse may be improper for the occasion. Consequently, some individuals were slaves to such a choleric temperament, that their actions seemed ill judged and irrational. Even Ammianus’ most highly praised individual, the emperor Julian, was several times presented as showing excessive rage.

What follows is a review of the uses of anger by Ammianus in regards to the groups under discussion. This is followed by an analysis of the chapter that focuses on the use of anger by Tacitus. Finally, there is a consideration of the study’s findings, as well as possible directions for future research.

## AMMIANUS AND ANCIENT AUTHORS

As promised in the Introduction, some indication will be provided here as to how influential the ancient authors, such as Aristotle, Seneca and Cicero along with their perceptions of anger, influenced or were relevant to, the anger portrayals in Ammianus. Looking at these authors is important, for it reveals just how much Ammianus adhered to the tradition, or rather a blend of traditions, as he perceived them. Throughout this book I have made notes where phrases indicate close connections with Ammianus’ predecessors.

One must take into account the differences in attitudes between men such as Aristotle and those such as Cicero, as their judgements on anger were different. For example Cicero, although

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<sup>5</sup> Of this literary technique, Levene (1997) 132 wrote that Ammianus was not alone in this, for “the presentation of history in a ‘tragic’ fashion, which meant above all the describing of events in a sensationalist manner likely to arouse the ‘tragic’ emotions of pity and fear in the audience, was, plainly, also a widely accepted technique; it is indeed used by some as a criterion of good historical writing.” Cf. Cic. *Fam.* 5.12.4 — 5; Dion. Hal. *Thuc* 15; Plut. *De glor. Ath* 347A-C.



accepting the importance of Aristotle, argued against the philosopher's acceptance of anger.<sup>6</sup> For in Aristotle's definition, anger was a desirable trait, "The man who is angry at the right things and with the right people, and, further, as he ought, when he ought, and as long as he ought, is praised" (*Eth. Nic.* 4.5.1125b30–35, tr. J.A.K. Thomson). He then stressed that, "This will be the good-tempered man." In contrast, the 'in-irascible' man does not feel appropriate anger, he "is thought not to feel things nor to be pained by them, and, since he does not get angry, he is thought unlikely to defend himself; and to endure being insulted and put up with insults to one's friends is slavish" (*Eth. Nic.* 4.5.1125b30–35, tr. J.A.K. Thomson). By not feeling just anger, Aristotle believed that the in-irascible man failed to "feel things," and thus has lost his sense of "self-worth."<sup>7</sup> Plato too believed that the honourable man who had been wronged would feel his spirit, "seethe and grow fierce." He would fight for justice or accept death (*Resp.* 4.440C–440D).<sup>8</sup>

Anger has always been an important topic for ancient authors, for it often led to acts of violence and revenge, which had the potential to disrupt a society, just as anger could disrupt an individual and might short-circuit due process.<sup>9</sup> In Chapter 1, episodes of revenge amongst the Roman military were discussed (e.g. 17.1.9, 17.10.6). Revenge was always a popular subject for moralists and philosophers. It was Aristotle's view that, "To passion and anger are due all acts of revenge" (*Rh.* 1.10). In the episodes of military anger, this was certainly the case. Revenge can take a long time to manifest, as other factors can delay taking this action, however, Ammianus was far more concerned with revenge that was immediate, and this was frequently the case in military concerns. However, other characters also felt vengeful at times. For instance, Tacitus revealed that Sejanus allegedly took his revenge on Drusus through the seduction of that man's wife, as well as his

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<sup>6</sup> Galinsky (1988) 332.

<sup>7</sup> Fisher (2002) 174, 176.

<sup>8</sup> In *The Republic*, Plato saw justice as, "the highest of the virtues of society as well as the most profound and encompassing virtue within the soul..." Fisher (2002) 178.

<sup>9</sup> Fisher (2002) 172.

participation in other misdeeds. In all these incidents, anger was the prime motivating factor, although naturally other aspects came into play.

Understandably, there were times when anger was unwarranted, at least in the eyes of the recipient and those witnesses who disagreed with the angry man's actions. In the words of Seneca then:

You have importuned me, Novatus, to write on the subject of how anger may be allayed, and it seems to me that you had good reason to fear in an especial degree this, the most hideous and frenzied of all the emotions.

(*De ira* 1.1.1)

Fear of an individual who was easily aroused to anger was apparent in Ammianus' presentation of Constantius at 14.5.4, and his being driven to frenzy by the flattery of his courtiers. This was a dangerous situation for anyone who was being spoken against. An emperor was in a position that he often found precarious and some, like Constantius, became overly dependent on the advice of courtiers who sought how best to advance their own positions, and did not hesitate to use any means at their disposable to cause an emotional reaction in the Augusti.

In the second century, the doctor Galen was a witness to members of the upper classes who used violence in their everyday lives, and he believed anger to be an illness of the soul. This was especially exemplified by the blind rage of the slave owner who would attack his slaves, "with his hand, and even sometimes with his feet, but more frequently with a whip or any piece of wood that happened to be handy" (*De cognoscendis animi morbis* 1.4).<sup>10</sup> This type of cruelty conducted by some individuals in the upper classes continued into the fourth century, and though Ammianus was not so concerned with the treatment of slaves, we do have a number of examples of the rage of the emperors that led to terrible tortures for the accused (e.g. 19.12.5; 28.1.11).

Ammianus judged the cruelty of the emperors and those in privileged positions harshly, and, like an orator, Ammianus wrote to move and instruct.<sup>11</sup> Even in the fourth century, many of the

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<sup>10</sup> As quoted in Brown (1992) 52; cf. 112.

<sup>11</sup> Cf. Galinsky (1988) 327.

comments Ammianus made followed a similar purpose. When he presented anger, it was at times used for making a judgement, whether for good or for ill. For example, the episode related at 22.11.3f., which in itself is an implicit moral comment. The behaviour of the officials created insult, which then led to the population becoming furious and acting out through, “a desire to blame individuals.” Naturally, cruelty was treated in a similar vein.

When we look at the episodes of anger in Ammianus, it is immediately apparent that his characters do not behave as Achilles behaved in the *Iliad*. Though Julian may have wished to emulate Achilles, as Alexander did, his rage would never match that described by Homer. Achilles reacted to a series of actions, with an anticipated future series of ever more serious actions in ongoing circumstances.<sup>12</sup> For example, in his fury, “Achilles scoffs at the pleas of the dying Hector. He wishes he could hack his meat away, eat it raw, and feed the rest to the dogs and vultures (22.345–54). He has no sympathy, no hesitation...”<sup>13</sup> Achilles, as with traditional representations of many kings, had an almost unlimited will, and he therefore raged when this was transgressed. Julian followed, or tried to follow, the Stoic view of anger, wherein restraint of this emotion was advocated. In the *Res Gestae*, this did occur more often than his noteworthy outbursts.

Of all the emperors, Valentinian was the one most prone to anger, even though in terms of actual episodes Julian outnumbered him as well as all the other emperors. Even so Valentinian, or any other emperor in the *Res Gestae*, did not share the long simmering resentment of Tiberius or the unrelenting vengefulness of Achilles. In temperament Valentinian was, at least in Ammianus’ characterisation, presented as far unlike the heroic, but flawed individual that Homer portrays. But so saying, Valentinian may have been quick to cool too. Achilles was overcome with outrage; his temper was implacable, until overcome by grief and guilt. For Valentinian on the other hand, he had, for most of the time, half an empire to run, and could not afford the disruptive isolation of an Achilles.

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<sup>12</sup> Fisher (2002) 184.

<sup>13</sup> Galinsky (1988) 341.

The emotion of anger has always been a field of controversy, but also a field for new insights for those who delve into its depths. We fear angry outbursts and their consequences today just as we feared them thousands of years ago. Traditionally, historians have mentioned emotions as tools for conveying experiences that may have occurred, and to explain the reasoning or causes behind certain events. Authors often imagined and reproduced emotional scenes complete with the physiological signs that accompanied them. This was a rhetorical device used to lend colour, as well as to sway the minds of the audience, by either inciting the reader/listener to share in the emotional event, or be repulsed by unsavoury consequences. Ammianus was no stranger to these devices, and by studying his anger portrayals, we can see how and to what extent he thought along the lines of Cicero and Seneca, who frequently condemned anger in authority figures. When it came to anger amongst the military, then it was to Aristotle, who supported justifiable anger against an antagonist that Ammianus most closely adhered.

## CHAPTER 1

In Chapter 1 of this book, I considered the relationship between anger and the army, as presented by Ammianus. The soldiers came across as forceful and violent, and they were easily led (as a collective) by their emotions. The nature of the soldiers was to exhibit anger against the enemy as part of their duty to their commanding officers. As such, it was a tool for their captains to utilise in order to motivate the legions. However, often this anger was meant to benefit only their united cause and was not always directed against a foreign enemy.

For example, at 20.8.8, the soldiers of Julian were angry (*iracundiae*) at neither winning an increase in rank (although naturally not all would have expected promotion) nor receiving their annual pay, as well as the order to go to the remotest parts of the eastern world. At 28.6.23, the Roman troops who had been stationed at Tripolis were furious (*iratorum militum*) with the envoy Flaccianus, for they had not been granted the supplies necessary to defend the city. In both instances, the Romans acted through feelings of outrage at unjust situations, a recurrent theme throughout Ammianus' portrayal of the soldiery. Moreover, the anger of the soldiers was at times stimulated by their leaders, such

as Constantius at 21.13.16, “This speech won them all to his side. Brandishing their spears angrily, they expressed much sympathy for Constantius and demanded to be led forthwith against the rebel” (*omnes post haec dicta in sententiam...suam hastisque vibrantes irati, post multa quae benivole responderant, petebant duci se protinus in rebellem*). It was a natural response to move from fear to anger, and to focus on attacking and killing an enemy force. Pent up rage that was suddenly released also added an extra emotional depth to their abilities as a fighting force.

At 16.12.13, Ammianus described another incident where Julian’s legions showed their support for their commander through a physical display of battle rage, where they, “gnashed and ground their teeth and showed their eagerness for battle by striking their spears and shields together” (*stridore dentium infrendentes, ardoremque pugnandi hastis illiando scuta monstrantes*). The soldiers were emotionally driven in many of their actions, and at times their anger was used to cover and reduce fear. Similarly, when the soldiers stationed in Paris learnt of the order from Constantius that they should be sent to the East, away from their families and from their beloved leader Julian (20.4.13), they were, “anxious and filled with twofold sorrow” (*dolore duplici suspensi discesserunt et maestis*). In the end, their new Augustus quietened them. He was able to apply the assurances that the soldiers needed to rectify this potentially disastrous situation. Ammianus indicated that the soldiers were simply reacting to a perceived outrage and that all it took was one false rumour to spark a potential insurgency (20.4.21). The soldiers transformed their fear and grief into anger on numerous occasions, particularly when it involved offences or unjust conditions. The troops in Tacitus were similarly galvanised.

On occasion, the anger of the Roman soldiers could be turned against their own military commanders, who likewise could feel anger towards them. Mostly, this impression is conveyed by the way in which the soldiers were described as a collective force, uniting against perceived, or real, bad leadership. However, once their demands were met, this anger usually dissipated quickly and, unlike some of the soldiers in Tacitus, their anger did not simmer indefinitely. For example, at 25.7.4, the emperor Jovian was forced into making a shameful treaty with Sapor when his soldiers were raging at their hardships. This then turned to protest at the

humiliating terms of the treaty, which was the other face of their anger. At 24.3.3, the soldiers of Julian threatened to mutiny when they perceived the smallness of the sum he offered them (*cum eos parvitate promissi percitus tumultuare sensisset*), and their behaviour in turn roused Julian to deep indignation.

Emperors, typically dependent upon the soldiers to promote and maintain their positions as Augusti, had to accommodate the passions of the armies under their command, who had the potential to turn against them at any moment. In Chapter 3, I examined some of the responses emperors exhibited towards the soldiers when they felt a certain degree of anger towards them. Julian in particular was shown as openly angry towards his own men, who were calmed rather than roused by his assertion of authority over them. In various ways, the anger of the Roman military had a significant effect upon the emperors and the fortunes of the Later Roman Empire. This therefore correlates with anger determinant number 6 from the Introduction, “a learnt response to certain situations.” The soldiers were trained to react in certain ways, and therefore their anger in battle was a “learned response.”

## CHAPTER 2

Chapter 2 was concerned with the emotion of anger as it pertained to barbarians and Persians. I also examined the keywords that Ammianus used to associate the barbarians with wild animals. “Barbarians,” purely by the status attached to this descriptive name, naturally invoked an emotional response in “civilised” society. Ammianus was familiar with these groups who were infiltrating, as well as being levied, into the empire. These included the military, and even on occasion individuals who ascended the imperial throne. Although the historian did not understand the full and devastating extent that the pressure some of these groups would have for his beloved empire, fear of them and their wrath still came through in his narrative. For example, after hearing news that the Romans were holding their kings hostage the Goths, with savage indignation, threatened to avenge their leaders. As a result Fritigern was able to secure his release by promising to calm down his people through revealing that he was still alive (31.5.7).

Similarly, the Burgundians felt indignation when they were insulted by the emperor Valentinian, who refused to join forces with them (28.5.13). The Quadi also reacted indignantly (*indigne*)

towards the Romans at the infringement of their rights when the Romans constructed a garrison camp across the Danube in their territory (29.6.2). In the beginning the Quadi remained quiet, but when the Romans killed their king Gabinius, their indignation and outrage at this insult forced them to act aggressively against the Romans. There are also instances of the barbarians demonstrating their outrage towards their own leaders, a reaction not restricted to the Roman military. Such an instance occurred at 16.12.34 when the Alamanni demanded that their leaders dismount from their horses and stand with them, so that they did not have an easy means of escape if they should be defeated.

Anger, like fear, could be very disruptive and caused all sorts of obstacles. An example of this was shown during the Battle of Strasbourg, where Ammianus reported that the Alamanni attacked the Roman forces with more anger than usual. Nevertheless, in this confrontation the Romans were undeterred and routed the Alamanni. The barbarians were afraid of the Romans' response, and Ammianus made clear that as a consequence of their anger, the Germans were thrown into disorder (16.12.36–44). Anger led the Germans to fight the Romans with haste, which in turn backfired upon them. Thus, anger created a complication by presenting the Germans with unrealistic goals as, through using force rather than caution, they became the defeated rather than the victors. As Libanius stated, "Anger was a passion of the soul that an upright man could regret" (*Or.* 51.25).<sup>14</sup> This statement could also be applied to groups.

That anger could be calmed is shown at 19.1.6, when, despite his rage towards the Romans at Amida in 359, the Persian king Sapor was able to be calmed by his attendants, cooling off enough to listen to their advice. As a result, Sapor requested their surrender the next day, and thus did not deviate from his, "glorious enterprises." What this shows is that anger could be quelled through its replacement with reasonable goals, such as clemency. Sapor was directed towards the wiser course of requesting a peaceful surrender that would, if achievable, cost his army far less. Sapor is an excellent example of a ruler whose anger could be lessened to achieve a satisfactory outcome. In contrast, those

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<sup>14</sup> As quoted in Brown (1992) 55.

individuals and groups who rushed into battle without restraint, and who did not encompass or embrace moderation, were more frequently cut down (e.g. 15.4.9; 19.11.15).

### CHAPTER 3

The notion of anger and leaders is more fully explored in Chapter 3, where the emperors come into play as world leaders. The emperors' every emotional state had the potential to affect all those in close proximity. This picture of the insecurity of emperors living on the brink of fear, anger, grief and jealousy provides a dark and bitter portrait of the late fourth century in Ammianus' history. We even view the passionate nature of the emperors from a variety of perspectives. For example, we have the responses of the soldiers, barbarians and Persians, as well as of the people, to the actions and behaviour of the emperor Julian. This came through, for instance, when Julian was made the object of ridicule and jest. Ammianus wrote of both the attitudes of the Antiochenes and the suppressed wrath (*ira*) of Julian at being made the butt of their jokes (22.14.2). Here the crowd showed these anger factors from the Introduction, "(1) a desire to blame individuals, (2) tendencies to overlook mitigating details before attributing blame, (4) tendencies to discount the role of uncontrollable factors when attributing causality." Julian, in his turn, showed, "(1) (possibly) a response to an accumulation of stress, (2) a sense of betrayal, when there is an acute awareness of disappointment, (3) a response to righteous indignation." There is frustration here, but also limited vindictiveness by Julian.

Even family members were not spared the rage of the emperors, which was usually fuelled by fearful suspicions. An example of this was apparent when Gallus had two prominent figures assassinated, Montius and Domitianus. This was the final straw for Constantius, who saw this as treason and at this news his anger became immense (14.11.13). Gallus had overstepped his prescribed boundaries and this impinged upon Constantius' sense of territoriality, consequently provoking his wrath.

Because of their power, a key response to anger that was available to emperors, was vengeance. At times we can see that the emperors were responding to anger in a clearly vindictive way. This came through, for example, at 14.5.4 in 354. Constantius had become infuriated by the usurpation of Magnentius. Those who



were accused of having supported and conspired with the usurper were not allowed a new trial after a writ of condemnation had been presented. Through the whispering of his courtiers, Constantius was said to have tortured, exiled and executed the collaborators. Even though these trials were conducted legitimately, the system of due process was not enough to let Constantius' anger cool. Due process was also not enough to let the anger of Valens cool at allegations of sedition. At 29.1.27, in 372, we are informed that Valens responded to the treason of Theodorus and his supporters by holding trials and punishing many people in Antioch. In fact, Valens became even more furious when he perceived that individuals were escaping punishment. Even though, in these accounts of bloody trials, Ammianus was likely exaggerating as to the numbers of victims that accumulated, it showed very clearly that the emperors were able to, and could, use their positions to enact vengeful and vindictive responses upon those whom they perceived were real or potential threats. Therefore, these determinants from the Introduction are all relevant here, "(1) a desire to blame individuals, (2) tendencies to overlook mitigating details before attributing blame, (3) tendencies to perceive ambiguous behaviour as hostile, (4) tendencies to discount the role of uncontrollable factors when attributing causality."

In the end, what made an emperor a good or bad ruler in the eyes of the historian, often boiled down to how much *moderatio* he showed towards his subjects. For Ammianus, it was the emperor's conduct and intellect that earned him praise, as well as how much he supported the curial class and behaved properly towards the senate in Rome.

Undoubtedly, what underlay the rulership of the emperors was an undercurrent of fear, and through this the emperors at times had to manoeuvre and coerce those around them to obey all their political decisions. Where reasoning failed, an emotional outburst could be just as effective in motivating others into action. Therefore, while the ideal is control of anger (an example of Julian being talked out of anger and restoring decorum is at 22.11), Ammianus recognised that at times it was necessary and justified. The emperors had a large radius of will, but coming to terms with what lay within that power and what lay without could easily lead

to delusion. Anger easily erupted when the will was subject to injury and there was an, “invasion of a just perimeter of the self.”<sup>15</sup>

## CHAPTER 4

When we examined the lowest stratum of society and the internal and external effects of anger upon them, it did appear that Ammianus subscribed to the Aristotelian view that anger was a mark of self-worth and not a form of shamelessness, or an attempt to disguise a lack of self-esteem or self-loathing. For, through their collective rage, the populace found a voice against oppression and misrule. The needs of the many influenced the decisions and behaviour of the few — a bit like the soldiers (e.g. 27.3.10). The rage of the populace reflected the determinants of anger from the Introduction, i.e. “(1) a response to an accumulation of stress, (2) a sense of betrayal, when there is an acute awareness of disappointment, (3) a response to righteous indignation.” Also these factors of anger: “(1) a desire to blame individuals, (2) tendencies to overlook mitigating details before attributing blame, (4) (possibly) tendencies to discount the role of uncontrollable factors when attributing causality.”

The mob demonstrated their own self-worth when those in power directly cheated them. This was made apparent at 27.3.10 in 365–7 when Lampadius, the prefect of Rome, in preparing to erect new buildings, took materials from the poor without paying for them. The response of the mob was to attack the house of Lampadius with torches and firebrands. This was the only sort of action that the mob could commit which would gain an immediate response. It also transmitted clearly their indignation at the injustices done to them. These actions did not reveal shamelessness, but rather a sense of what rightly belonged to them and their fellow men. This therefore fits into the Aristotelian perception of anger.

The anger of the mob could also influence religious decisions, as the brutal slaying of Christians at 27.3.13 revealed when 137 corpses were found in the basilica of Sicininus after a mob had rioted there. This incident demonstrated the importance of preserving the favour of the Roman mob for religious and political manoeuvrings.

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<sup>15</sup> Cf. Fisher (2002) 160, quoted 163.

In certain instances, the united anger of the people became so violent in its nature that there were times when they actually murdered members of the aristocracy (e.g. 14.7.6; 22.11.8). Nevertheless, this is not surprising in a society without police. A violent mob could often have a big impact, and we saw this in the late Republic and early Empire.

Some city prefects however, actually seemed to have the well-being of the populace at heart, and Leontius was one individual who was able to face up to the angry mob and survive and quieten their rage (15.7.3), for in 355 the Roman mob was demonstrating its outrage at an alleged shortage of wine. As a consequence, Peter Valvomeres, the ringleader of the mob, was flogged, and this punishment caused his supporters to flee. This does not suggest that the mob were behaving unduly or irrationally, but rather they demanded what they believed was due to them. Their anger was a sign of perceived entitlement. In this incident and others, Ammianus demonstrated that the unity of the mob was quickly ended, often through the efforts of a single person in power. This was usually when either the mob was granted their demands, or was threatened with further punishment or hardships and forced to break up.

## CHAPTER 5

Chapter 5 centred on the anger of many, mostly despicable, elite figures, who vented their rage and indignation against their peers or those weaker than themselves. It was often necessary to conceal and control anger, but when it did erupt it had, as for the emperors, far-reaching consequences. Those in official positions were often jostling for power and the perks that came with it, and there were instances recorded by Ammianus of the sometimes fatal consequences of these political elbowings. From Ammianus' accounts, it is apparent that the obsession of many of these elites was to gain status for themselves at the expense of others. This was a recurrent theme throughout Roman history.

Following along these lines, we have the intrigues of 368 where, in order to undermine Maximinus, the *vicarius urbis Romae* Aginatus took advantage of a supposed insult made by the *praefectus annonae* against Sextus Petronius Probus. He consequently

sent the prefect a letter, informing him how to eliminate Maximinus. However, Probus betrayed Aginatus and delivered the letter straight to Maximinus himself (28.1.33).

Even those who were held in the highest esteem could, on occasion, come under the wrath of a magnate or even a powerful usurper. At 26.8.13, Ammianus described the furious reaction of Procopius to the supposed indifference of the ex-general Arbitio. At first, he spared the possessions of the general, but when desperation ensued and his confidence was shaken, his angry response was to take revenge on Arbitio. The consequences of his actions had a cataclysmic outcome. His anger reflected the following determinants of anger from the Introduction, “(1) (possibly) a response to an accumulation of stress, (2) a sense of betrayal, when there is an acute awareness of disappointment, (4) (possibly) anxiety, where anger seeks to mask or displace feelings of shame or helplessness.” As this episode showed, anger could be self-destructive.

It is shown in this chapter that anger was just as powerful a force for magnates as it was for any other group or individual. However, for magnates in particular, anger could be a mask for feelings of low worth and shame,<sup>16</sup> as well as the expression of a sense of entitlement. Anger also, “carried a stigma...the stigma of indecorous behaviour might at any moment be translated into political isolation, into loss of office and eventual exposure to revenge.”<sup>17</sup>

## CHAPTER 6

The focus of Chapter 6 is the portrayal of anger in the *Annals* and *Histories* of Tacitus. When possible, the similarities and differences in anger portrayals in Tacitus and Ammianus are examined. The portrayals of emotion are remarkably comparable and we can see that, “Tacitus’s treatment of anger is extremely like that of Ammianus.”<sup>18</sup>

The most angry and resentful of all the emperors was Tiberius, who had suffered much due to his position and treatment

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<sup>16</sup> On the subject of shame, see Theophrastus’ “The Shameless Man,” *Char.* 9.8.

<sup>17</sup> Brown (1992) 55.

<sup>18</sup> Seager (1986) 42.

by others, both before and after becoming *princeps*. Many faced the seething resentment of the emperor, and Tiberius had cause for many of his bitter feelings, including the marriage of Gallus to his former wife Vipsania (*Ann.* 1.12). Tacitus' portrayal of a resentful ruler was a stock rhetorical device. The ruler whose faults included excessive anger was an element in the instability of the Principate, as he saw it. Not all keywords were the same, or the same emphasis placed on certain terms, but like Ammianus he brought out the harmful, but sometimes constructive, consequences of anger. Both authors rarely resorted to explicit comments on anger episodes.

Tacitus incorporated emotion to enhance and underpin certain incidences in a deliberate measure to portray an episode as being the cause, or the result of, the feeling or feelings of human beings, and this construction was followed closely by Ammianus. For example, in the works of both authors anger served to avenge a suffered disgrace (*dedecus*) or betrayal (19.11.12; 19.11.14).<sup>19</sup> Tacitus regarded anger as more frequently caused by divine intervention into the historical process (*Hist.* 2.38.2; 4.54.2; 4.84.2; *Ann.* 1.39; 4.1; 13.17; 14.22), while Ammianus understood *ira* exclusively as a driving force of human nature.<sup>20</sup>

In Tacitus, the emperors were aware on some level that the radius of their will was vast, and they expected that their decisions and expectations would be met and sometimes became furious when they were not. Vengefulness and vindictiveness often came hand in hand in cases involving betrayal, or lack of trust in others. For example, at *Ann.* 14.49 in AD 62, Nero was angry at the outspokenness of men such as Thrasea and the senators' decision to grant Antistius a lighter sentence, showing *clementia* against a defendant. The non-conformist behaviour of Thrasea caused Nero angst, but it was the senate's failure to punish the praetor Antistius Sosianus sufficiently, a man who had written satires on the emperor and read them aloud at a large dinner party, that infuriated Nero. Vengefulness and vindictiveness also came through in another episode involving Nero and anger. At *Ann.* 16.22 in AD 66, Nero stimulated the anger of Cossutianus against Thrasea for his forthrightness, as well as for a previous insult the man had

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<sup>19</sup> Cf. Brandt (1999) 167.

<sup>20</sup> Brandt (1999) 172.

made against him. Both these episodes reflect anger determinant number 2 from the Introduction, i.e. “a sense of betrayal, when there is an acute awareness of disappointment,” as well as factor of anger number 1, “a desire to blame individuals.” As well as these factors, anxiety and insecurity must also have been involved in Nero’s reaction to these events.

When we consider whether or not the anger episodes were justifiable, or fit in with the views on anger put forward by Seneca or Aristotle, really depends upon the circumstances. In general, when looking at the soldiers’ behaviour, especially in the *Histories* of Tacitus, his portrayal of the anger of the military leans towards the perception of Seneca. For example, at *Hist.* 1.9 in AD 69, we learn that Flaccus could not curb the frenzy of the soldiers in Upper Germany. Their anger was caused by a number of factors, including the lack of personality and prestige of their commanding officer, Hordeonius Flaccus. According to Seneca, “(Anger is) the most hideous and frenzied of all the emotions.” Further on, he describes anger as “an ugly and horrible picture of distorted and swollen frenzy — you cannot tell whether this vice is more execrable or more hideous” (*De ira* 1.1.5). As we saw in Chapter 6, Tacitus recorded the causes for the soldiers’ anger. However, as they behaved as a mob, their anger was frequently portrayed as unjust. This was unlike *ira militum* in Ammianus, who held more of an Aristotelian viewpoint in regards to the soldiers, and found his soldiers’ anger justifiable when it was directed towards an aggressor.



## FINDINGS

### PURPOSE OF THIS STUDY

As discussed at the beginning of this book, the purpose of this study was to explore the way in which anger was used to strengthen and validate the portraits of individuals and groups in the narrative history of Ammianus Marcellinus. The usefulness of such a study is furthered through its attention to detail. It has also added to the existing scholarship by presenting to the readership a rather neglected dimension in Ammianus' portrayals. The design of this book was to exploit a rather rich ground for understanding the rhetorical approach of Ammianus, through his direct portrayals. As this study is an exploratory one, descriptive statistics that summarised the data obtained have been presented, as their purpose is to describe the characteristics of a sample.

Also presented in the Introduction to this book was the hypothesis and it is reproduced here, "Ammianus' treatment of the emotion of anger reveals as much about his education, values, beliefs and personality, as it does about the people he writes about. He sees in this emotion an important determinant of events." A hypothesis of this nature will naturally involve major variables. These involve taking into account Ammianus' perception and moral interpretation of groups and individuals. For example, he did not hold the plebeians in the same high regard as the senatorial order. Yet these variables are confounded, as he assessed different senators by merit of their individual nature. So that deductions do not become grossly inaccurate, this book has had to take such moral considerations into account.

A study of this nature can reveal much about what is not said, although an issue such as anger's duration is difficult to assess in a narrative, unless the author is sufficiently interested in telling it.



Also the role of apology in the *Res Gestae* is not something that plays a significant part in Ammianus' writings.<sup>1</sup> Ammianus was rather concerned with immediate effects, such as when someone was insulted or experienced frustration. Also, the few negative and hypothetical examples of anger implied that anger was a possibility, but was not always manifested as the result of a cognitive assessment of the situation, or because the fears or speculation were groundless.

Apart from the silences, we have the data that shows the nature of Ammianus' awareness of the role of anger in all its myriad forms and uses. To create this project, tables were derived which provided the raw data. This permitted sound generalisations about the place of anger in Ammianus, whether mentioned for rhetorical reasons or because the historical record required some references. The significance of this process has been discussed to some extent in the Introduction, but in this section I would like to reiterate the findings.

## METHOD

The first stage of this study, as outlined in the Introduction, was the undertaking of a literature review to position the project in relation to other research. Then the types of questions driving the research were discussed, in order to contextualise the research. A discussion of Ammianus' *Res Gestae* was made which included his writing methods to establish the type of text we are dealing with. As well, the Introduction stated how this project would be set out, how the data would be collected and how it would be analysed. In the main body of the book, a discursive analysis was the end result and intuition played no part in the unearthing of results. Discussion of material relevant to Ammianus' time period and supporting evidence was at times incorporated, but did not affect the results of this enquiry.

Qualitative research methods were used in this study to enable data collection and measurement. This was conducted through the

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<sup>1</sup> See however Newbold (2001) for an examination which deals in part with pardon in the *Res Gestae* and how apologies can elicit forgiveness in certain circumstances.

use of concordances and from lists of words which, when assembled, gave key information for the creation of a thematic analysis. The list of keywords chosen was based on Latin words found in the text of Ammianus that indicated precisely the emotion of anger. The list of keywords was reduced to only encompass those anger terms that indicated specific manifestations of anger. Each anger term was then measured through various processes, including context, functionality, ambiguity, etc., so that themes, essences and patterns could be determined. Perhaps most importantly, groups of human beings were associated with their particular anger instance. Frequencies were highlighted in the tables, such as the number of occurrences of *ira* in total, as well as which groups exhibited *ira*. The variables involved in such a method of data collection also needed to be taken into account. They included the purpose behind using such words as *ira*, rather than, say, *indignatio*, what groups were eligible to show *ira* and why Ammianus believed such terms fitted in to certain situations, amongst other factors.

Trustworthiness of language is also a relevant factor, and here we have no recourse but to trust Ammianus' use of words and the fact that the majority of these have been preserved throughout the centuries. Language is the main way to interpret human phenomena and as the purpose of this study is to unearth the design behind Ammianus' portrayals of human beings, language plays a vital role.<sup>2</sup> What differentiates this study from quantitative research methods is that it is based on words, rather than numbers. However, an interesting finding from this study is that words can be useful tools for analysis.

## RESULTS

The results of this survey were encompassed in table and graph form. The tables highlighted the summary data and displayed the relationship between variables. Grouped frequency data was divided into sections to make it logical and mutually exclusive. Each table is a necessary part of the overall discussion in the chapters and adds to the text where relevant. Descriptive information presented here is intended for a scholarly audience interested in Ammianian studies and literature studies in general.

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<sup>2</sup> For the "trustworthiness of language," see Roberts (2001) 424.

Furthermore, it is also aimed at an audience with an interest in human psychology and sociology and thus the language is designed to fit these audiences.

By far, the most instances of anger accorded to an individual are given to Julian, with seventeen episodes. This reflects the degree of importance Ammianus bestowed upon his favourite emperor, rather than necessarily being an accurate representation of his qualities as an emperor, the length of his reign or even his temperament. Julian reigned from 360–363 (as usurper and then as sole Augustus, as Caesar, 355–360), whereas Valentinian I, who is recorded as getting angry only eleven times, reigned far longer, from 364–375.<sup>3</sup> Valentinian was generalised as being an irascible emperor, but Ammianus was more concerned with presenting him as a stereotypical, anger-prone figure and thus his anger episodes are frequently alluded to, rather than being realised manifestly. To summarise the data then, out of the forty-nine recorded instances of anger for emperors and Caesars, Julian's anger makes up 34.7% of the anger instances, whereas Valentinian's anger makes up 18.4%, which, incidentally, is exactly the same figure for Constantius. At a third of the anger instances, Julian's anger clearly influences Ammianus' portrayals and as pointed out earlier, it was not always for righteous reasons. Through developing characters along these lines, Ammianus subjects himself to literary tradition, with the good emperors balanced out by the bad, although there are in fact grey areas.

The most common anger word in the *Res Gestae* is *ira*. This is not surprising and could be assumed to be the case. It is interesting that it is used by Ammianus, in the majority of cases, to describe the anger of emperors (12 times) and the Roman military (15 times). Therefore, the *ira* of the emperors makes up 33.3% of the instances and the *ira* of the Roman military makes up 41.6%. Of those twelve times for the emperors, *ira* is used to describe the rage of Julian seven times. Thus, out of the total 36 episodes of *ira*, Julian's *ira* equals 19.4%, certainly a significant contribution overall. In the *Histories* and *Annals*, *ira* is also the most common anger term (56 times), but for Tacitus, it is the Roman military (21 times) that

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<sup>3</sup> i.e. eight years versus eleven years. Cf. Constantius' twenty-four years.

account for the frequency. Thus, the Roman military make up 37.5% of the total examples of manifest *ira*. *Ira* in the Roman emperors in Tacitus makes up only 10.7% of the instances. Interestingly, it is Tacitus' magnates who exhibit the most instances of *ira* of all individuals, at 16%. For both authors, *ira* signifies direct and unmistakable anger. It is anger that is directed towards another who has caused the individual or group some harm or insult, whether real or perceived.

As for the causes of anger, the most frequent in Tacitus is threats (22 times), this is closely followed by insult (21 times) and injustice (21 times), then treachery (17 times). This fits with Aristotle's perceptions of the causes of anger and the course of action that one should take in return. For example, he wrote, "For no one grows angry with a person on whom there is no prospect of taking vengeance, and we feel comparatively little anger, or none at all, with those who are much our superiors in power" (*Rh.* 1.11). Within Tacitus' works, it was the Roman military that reacted most to threats and insult. Anger is a "territorial passion" and they responded as a fighting unit should respond, with aggression and for honour.<sup>4</sup> Being a Roman soldier was largely about being proud and having pride in one's unit. The soldiers who shared the same ideals and objectives behaved as a combined force, and together they were able to overcome just about any antagonist, or perceived target. Fuelled by collective goals, as well as elements that included anger (and often incited by leaders), the Roman army rose up and tore down emperors (e.g. AD 69). The army was crucial to the survival of the empire and their anger could have momentous consequences.

Of the subjects in Ammianus, it is the emperors and Caesars who exhibit anger most often (49 times). This means that out of the total percentage, the anger of emperors makes up 31.4%. The next highest percentage belongs to the Persians and barbarians at 27.5%. This reflects the centrality of the emperors to Ammianus' narrative. These men had the power to change and transform destinies, and their anger could crucially determine decisions. The anger of the Persians and barbarians provided an effective counter-measure for, on one hand, we have the Romans exhibiting righteous anger and fighting for the good of their empire, whereas

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<sup>4</sup> Cf. Fisher (2002) 181.

the barbarians were ferocious and uncultivated and their anger was fuelled by their savage impulses that need to be tamed. For Tacitus, it was the Roman military that made up the majority of his anger instances (56 times), which equates to 64.3% of the anger total. The largest number of these occurred in the extant *Histories*, covering AD 69–70 (33 times). Anger in the military makes up the majority of specific anger words in the *Annals* (23 times), where there is more focus on the affairs at Rome, especially in the Praetorian Guard. If we take Tacitus' work at an emotional level, then it is clear that *ira militum* was a primary concern for the historian. He was writing about periods of time where to exhibit rage was to exhibit dominance over the social environment. It is perhaps a surprising find that Ammianus' primary concern was the anger of the emperors. From Ammianus' perspective, the emperors were removed from the public eye and the military was observable at first hand, whereas for Tacitus, his narrative had the emperors as his central theme but, as in the *Histories*, the army could make or break an emperor.

From studying our findings, one can rightly assert that Tacitus, more so than Ammianus, shared Plato's belief in the integration of emotional responses in the mortal soul. According to *Timaeus* 69d, the pathetic dispositions of the mortal soul are *hedonē* (pleasure, "the greatest incentive to evil") and *lupe* (distress, "that takes flight from good"), then *tharsos* (confidence) and *phobos* (fear), which are characterized as, "two foolish advisers," *elpis* ("misleading" hope), and *thumos* (anger "not easily comforted").<sup>5</sup> Thus for Tacitus and Aristotle these emotions were linked with distress, and this particularly applied to the anger felt by the military during the mutinies described by Tacitus. The distressed emotional state of the soldiers was especially apparent in the mutinies in Pannonia (*Ann.* 1.16–30) in AD 14, as well as in Germany (*Ann.* 1.31–49), where the emperor's adopted son and nephew Germanicus was in command. There the soldiers offered to support Germanicus if he should wish to supplant Tiberius (*Ann.* 1.31.1).

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<sup>5</sup> For these definitions, see Knuuttila (2004) 15–17. In Plato's *Laws* 9.864b, pleasure and desires are treated as one group, and fear and anger are treated as forms of distress.

Both authors used anger along with other emotions to manipulate their readers and listeners. This was a well-known and practised rhetorical technique. In his *Rhetoric* 2.1–11, Aristotle's purpose was to explain how the orator may change the judgements of the audience through giving rise to emotions, "Emotions, such as anger, pity, fear and all that are similar to them and their opposites, change people with respect to their judgements, and they are accompanied by distress and pleasure" (1378a19–22).<sup>6</sup> When we look at the portrayals of anger, we are at times confronted by a range of techniques incorporated by the historians either to subtly or bluntly reinforce suggestions of their subject's anger. For example in AD 70, Tacitus described a character trait of the Roman soldiers and suggested that due to different allegiances, the soldiers were either obedient or in a frenzy (*Hist.* 4.27). His audience would immediately assume that the soldiers were prone to passionate outbursts without just cause, naturally this was unacceptable behaviour. Whether it is true or not played secondary importance, if indeed any importance at all. Another example one can give of this art of persuasion is from Ammianus at 21.16.9, where Constantius was described in a generalisation in his epitome. Ammianus stated that Constantius' bitterness and suspicions were stretched to the utmost in cases where people were reported to have insulted his majesty. The audience would immediately assume that this was a characteristic of the emperor and it did not need any factual evidence to back it up.

What also matters when we look at emperors, or persons who were in positions of power over others, is their internal locus of control. For someone with authority over other human beings, he or she must have the belief that they have control over a situation which is seen as modifiable and therefore able to be manipulated. When one loses that control, or that control is not apparent, the result is at times anger due to the loss of affective control.<sup>7</sup> Therefore, individuals subconsciously internalise a sense of control over that which is within their orbit of influence or, "the radius of the will." This includes people, events, and processes that are clearly external. The individuals and even the homogenous groups such as the Roman soldiers did precisely that, and they processed

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<sup>6</sup> Cf. Knuuttila (2004) 32.

<sup>7</sup> Cf. Lieberman (2004) 121.

their internal locus of control. When their will was subverted by external forces they naturally reacted in opposition, after all, we are looking at a period where violence was commonplace and expected, and Ammianus' characters behaved accordingly. Although everyone has, in effect, a "radius of the will," not everyone can act out on it. Only those with external power could effectively rectify their hurt, and only those worth mentioning were recorded by Ammianus and Tacitus.

Numerous examples could be given from Ammianus and Tacitus to support the above statement by Lieberman. Time and again we are made aware of the angry reactions of those whose will was subverted, either consciously or not. One outstanding case of an individual reacting violently to the loss of affective control, whether real or imaginary, occurred in 364. As we recall, Apronianus, the *praefectus urbis* in Antioch, lost one eye and believed it was due to the dark arts (26.3.2). Apronianus surely believed that he was a powerful figure who could manipulate the citizens directly under his control. Therefore, when he believed that his power was being negatively transgressed, he tracked down the supposed criminals who dabbled in the magic arts and punished them cruelly. An example of this is also found in Tacitus, where in AD 18 Piso was angry with the Athenians for not releasing Theophilus, who had been condemned for forgery (*Ann.* 2.55). Piso, with his importance well established in the Roman governing aristocracy, was outraged that his will was being undermined by the Athenians, a people who had once been great but were now reduced to a far lesser status. Piso was unable to control the Athenians and left them fuming.

Anger did prove futile at times, however, it did have the potential for effectively achieving certain aims, at least in the short term. Yet, because of the resentment anger may cause, there may be long term costs. Anger in Ammianus appeared as a way in which power was exercised and released. It motivated a wide range of actions, caused injustices and provoked reactions on behalf of justice. It was, therefore, an integral part of the moral codes people lived by. This included Ammianus' own moral code; however, we have not ventured into much speculation about Ammianus' own angry feelings, verging as they do on disgust and horror at times. Reports of anger reflected some of the historian's own personal

viewpoints, as his infrequent comments on anger episodes reveal. The Introduction listed the tendencies behind anger and the determinants of anger, and much of Ammianus' accounts (or some of them) fit these categories. His understanding and treatment of anger, therefore, is not idiosyncratic, but is informed by close observation of its causes and consequences, as well as by a rhetorical colouring. In the frequent absence of autopsy, he relies on what would seem possible and plausible to his audience and appeals to what would move them. Similar psychological determinants occur repeatedly throughout the episodes. At times anger can be caused by a number of factors, and these are indicated where relevant. However, what appears to be the single most important determinant for anger is a sense of betrayal (number 2). Every group is stirred to anger by betrayal to some degree. Anger also empowers and overcomes fear, as at the same time it clouds judgement. This is apparent in the *Res Gestae* at 17.1.9 when soldiers were hampered in their progress by trees felled by their enemies. Because of this insult and frustration, the soldiers dispelled their fear and replaced it with anger, caused by the thought of an outrage.

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Ammianus' own reactions to displays of anger were usually implicit, rather than explicit. He was aware of the audience whom he was writing for and his own indignation was, at times, used to rouse similar feelings of outrage or contempt in his readers or listeners. He reported displays of anger because they revealed character, had consequences and explained historical events. Also, he did so to bring colour and vividness to his narrative.<sup>8</sup>

Anger is a natural survival skill for humans, as natural as the flight response when we feel threatened. To stand up and face those who threaten our notions of security and justice by making ourselves seem more threatening, or by using the power given to us to condemn others who may be potential threats, is a way of making ourselves feel better and restoring our sense of security. Anger is protective and in this way we can readily agree with Aristotle that we feel anger most strongly when it is on behalf of

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<sup>8</sup> Cf. Auerbach (1953) 56. Matthews (1989) 429–431, disagreed with the stoic nature of Ammianus.



people we feel most closely connected with. Altruistic anger is seen most often in mob behaviour, or when the soldiers were fighting together on behalf of a leader, or an emperor, or both. However, this was less frequently seen in individuals. The perception that anger is justified when a wrong has been committed is a strong feature of Ammianus' account.

Ammianus wrote to instruct as a traditional moralist and anger portrayal was one vehicle for this. His purpose was to reveal where individuals, in particular, went wrong. He pointed out their failings more so, presumably, than where they went right, so that his audience could feel indignation at the injustices and learn from them. However, the angered individual or group almost always saw their anger as 'right', no matter its causes and effects. Ammianus was aware that his subjects were always capable of showing anger or coming under its influence from others. Each group felt that their anger suited their particular claim to justice, and this ranged from the emperors themselves to the most humble slave (28.1.49). As one can summarise, "Anger is a relation of the will to that radius which it assumes to be within its control, or within which anything that happens either affirms or denies that territory."<sup>9</sup>

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The contribution this book has made to Ammianian studies is a significant one because it has advanced our understanding of the author's personal concepts and thought processes, especially in regards to his evaluation of emotion. We know from past studies how much Ammianus was a moralist, and that he was concerned with the discernment between good and evil, between righteous action and barbaric behaviour. However, this book goes right to the very heart of the issue, to the very words that Ammianus used in their context. It draws forth the tone, the implication and the depth of his portrayals, whilst evaluating his portrayals from a variety of perspectives. From this study we now know that Valentinian, whilst irascible, was not the most anger prone emperor. We know that the gods in Ammianus do become angry. We know the choice of language Ammianus preferred to express

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<sup>9</sup> Fisher (2002) 182.

his character's anger and we know the extent to which innuendo and generalisations pepper his anger portrayals.

Through dividing the anger portraits into chapters that discuss groups, this book has grouped data logically and practically to better disseminate the constituent themes. What has necessarily been to a large extent excluded from this book is a discussion of Ammianus' own anger. Ammianus placed himself into his narrative as a literary construct, and deliberately incorporated rhetorical effect to promote his particular viewpoints. Ammianus was also a product of his upbringing, his education, his career and his purpose as a historian. As such, it is what he portrays, rather than his perception of his own self, which is significant to this study.

To conclude, Ammianus was conscious of anger and its effects, and his perceptions fit into the traditional perceptions of anger, its manifestations and consequences. This study has provided us with one means of examining Ammianus' portrayal of character through a particular medium that is the emotion of anger. Future studies could contribute to this field through examinations of other emotions, such as fear and grief. Authors other than Tacitus could be used to make comparisons with Ammianus and further psychological approaches could also be applied. In fact, the type of analysis I have applied to Ammianus could be applied to other ancient authors and it would be interesting to make future comparisons there. In sum, anger has provided an interesting and effective means for understanding Ammianus as an author, a rhetorician and a moralist. This is a growing field that can, and should, be developed further.



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<sup>1</sup> Not always abbreviated in the text.

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